

EC grants emergency aid to Palestinians

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The European Community (EC) Saturday gave the Palestinians nearly \$19 million in emergency aid for their universities and peace negotiating team. Manuel Marin, vice president of the European Commission, said the money was a show of self-sufficiency as quickly as possible, but urged Palestinians to become self-sufficient as quickly as possible. Mr. Marin said there was a "real international assistance." Some \$1 billion has been pledged by various countries in loans and grants over the next five years to build the Palestinian economy as a foundation for peace. Europe promised \$600 million. In addition, the community on Saturday gave \$18 million in emergency aid to the six universities in the occupied lands. The universities have been in a financial crisis since the 1991 Gulf war. In addition, the EC gave \$380,000 on Saturday to the 40 technical committees that have been doing research for the Palestinian peace negotiators. Also Saturday, Mr. Marin laid the cornerstone for the first of 400 housing units in the occupied Gaza Strip paid for by Europe. The apartment are to house Palestinian refugees.



Jordan Times

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Arafat seeks to make peace in Yemen

SANAA (AP) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat set aside peace with Israel on Saturday to try to settle the dispute in Yemen between its two top leaders. The chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), who arrived here late Friday, went to the southern city of Aden to meet with Vice-President Ali Salem Al-Beidh. For more than two months Mr. Beidh has refused to come to Sanaa to be sworn in because of a rift with President Ali Abdullah Saleh over the pace of reform in the country since South and North Yemen merged in May 1990. The dispute between the two leaders has raised fears of a possible secessionist movement on Mr. Beidh's part and has aggravated a disastrous economic situation that threatens food riots similar to those last December which has left 100 dead. Mr. Arafat's effort to achieve reconciliation follows others by President Issai Elwerke of Eritrea and Sultan Qaboos of Oman, who has been sending his envoys. French President Francois Mitterrand also urged reconciliation during his recent visit to Sanaa. Yemen's officials said that Mr. Arafat was accompanied on his "goodwill effort" by Sheikh Mujahed Abu Shawrab, one of the most respected tribal leaders in Yemen.

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Majali: No government interference in elections

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Saturday stressed that the government does not seek to marginalise the role of any party in the country.

In an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) Arabic Service, said that the government "is for all people and for all parties." "Our concern is to apply the Constitution and ensure equality between all Jordanians regardless of their religion, origin or language," Dr. Majali said.

He also stressed that all government employees were free to elect their candidates, but warned that they should not interfere in the election process.

"We all do not interfere in the elections," Dr. Majali said. "The demand by some parties to have their agents (who are government employees) at the polling booths should be rejected to avoid interference or influence by these civil servants on the election's process," he said.

He emphasised that no civil servant is allowed to use his or her post in the government institutions in favour of any candidate, but all government employees had the political right to discuss politics and choose their candidates.

On the government's stand vis-a-vis the elections and the Arab-Israeli peace process, Dr. Majali underlined that

Peres sees 'progress' in talks with Syria

CAIRO (Agencies) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres called in an interview published Saturday for an early summit between Israel and Syria to build on "progress" made on bilateral issues in the Middle East peace talks.

"Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's tour (to the United States, France and Syria) and his meeting with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad have led to progress in the Syrian-Israeli chapter," Mr. Peres told the Egyptian daily Al Ahran.

He gave no details but he said Mr. Mubarak in a message addressed on Thursday to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had proposed "ideas aimed at injecting new blood into the various files of the peace process."

"Israel is studying these ideas which will have positive effects on the region in the near future," he said.

Mr. Peres said he hoped a Rabin-Assad summit could be organised "at the end of this year or the beginning of next year." Such a meeting would have to be well prepared and preceded by lower-level contacts, he said.



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday meets with members of the constituent assembly of the Centre for Studies on Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights (Petra photo)

King urges voters to exercise their right, opt for moderation

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday called on Jordanians to take part in and vote for moderation in the Kingdom's first multiparty parliamentary elections in nearly four decades.

The King called on the voters to exercise their constitutional right by voting in Monday's polls and said the polls would be free, fair and democratic.

"Let us choose those known for their awareness, purity,

fairness (and) dedication," said the King.

"Let us be on a high level of responsibility and caution so as not to fall for the crackle of loud voices. Fake glittering slogans or words of good meant to do bad," he told members of the Centre for Studies on Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights.

The genuine sense of national belonging makes it imperative on each Jordanian to exercise his or her right to elect

representatives in Parliament, he said.

"Any failure to fulfil this duty is to be considered as a shirking of a sacred national duty," the King said.

"One should not be taken in by the loud voices or the false and lustrous slogans or deceived by the tempting terms that in reality harbour evil-doing," the King said.

Following are major ex-

(Continued on page 3)

Israel studies new ideas on Taba talks

CAIRO (Agencies) — Israel is studying new Egyptian ideas aimed at relaunching self-rule talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres was quoted as saying Saturday.

Mr. Peres, according to the Egyptian daily Al Ahran, said Egypt had submitted the new ideas during a lightning trip to Israel on Thursday by Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa.

A Foreign Ministry official declined to confirm the report but told Reuters: "Musa explored with Israeli officials means to activate negotiations on the Syrian-Israeli track."

Al Ahran, flagging its interview as an exclusive, did not say when Mr. Peres made his remarks.

"President Hosni Mubarak's letter to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin included new ideas aimed at injecting new life to the peace process on all tracks," it quoted him as saying.

The PLO said Saturday the fate of the stalled Israeli-PLO talks on Palestinian self-rule is expected to be decided at a

meeting between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and President Mubarak.

The two leaders are due to meet in Egypt Sunday and the PLO's Yemen representative, Yahia Rabah, told Reuters "a decision will be made in the light of this meeting."

Mr. Peres also told Al Ahran that the autonomy talks in the Egyptian Red Sea of Taba would resume next week.

Obstacles that arose at the last session of talks "were not as important as some people made them out to be," he said.

PLO quit the Taba negotiations last Tuesday complaining that Israel was offering only to redeploy the army on Gaza and not to withdraw in line with their Sept. 13 autonomy accord.

Israel proposed to pull back troops to three areas around Jewish settlements on the Gaza Strip while the Palestinians demanded a "general military withdrawal."

Mr. Arafat said Friday he would insist that Israel stick "to the letter" of the autonomy deal.

Jordan Times reporters continue their coverage of candidates and campaigns in the 20 electoral districts:

Mafraq, with 3 seats, expects return of at least one incumbent

IAF bid is only an attempt to establish bridgehead

By Ayman Safadi and Ghazi Haddad in Mafraq

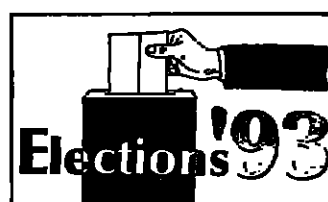
WITH THE 34,085 registered voters in this governorate almost equally divided between the city of Mafraq and the villages surrounding it, only candidates with support in both areas stand a real chance of winning any of the three (Muslim) seats allocated for the district.

Of the 17 candidates contesting the election in this underdeveloped tribal constituency in the north east of Jordan, only six have sizeable support in the city and can

count on a large base of tribal support in the villages of the Bani Hassan tribes.

These are former deputies Abdul Karim Al Dughmi and Mohammad Abu Oleim, former Minister of Social Development Amin Mashagbeh, former member of the National Consultative Council (which was substituting for Parliament in the late seventies and early eighties) Abdullah Akhu Rashedeh, Suleiman Abu Odeileh and Mahmoud Al Hosban.

Even though Mr. Dughmi is challenged by two members of his Mashagbeh clan of the Bani Hassan tribe, the former minister of labour can



count on about 2,600 votes of the 5,500 registered votes of the Mashagbeh.

"The split within the Mashagbeh will affect me, but I have a presence in (the city) and my service in (the previous Parliament and the government) gives me an advantage over others," Mr. Dughmi, who scored 4,025 votes in the 1989 elections,

told the Jordan Times. Independent observers agree. They say this leftist incumbent will be among the strong contenders in the electoral race because he can draw from the votes of the city.

Former minister Mashagbeh, who came under fire from deputies in the 11th Parliament for allegedly favouring his hometown in the distribution of assistance provided by the Social Development Fund when he was minister of social development in the cabinet of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, is expected

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Ramtha and Bani Kenanah — Islamists not running in conservative district

By Suhair Obeidat

SPECIAL TO THE JORDAN TIMES
HARTHA, NORTHERN JORDAN — The size of the candidate's clan and its ability to unify ranks as opposed to his political affiliations is the predominant factor expected to affect the choice of the 61,236 voters in the Ramtha and Bani Kenanah district when they cast their votes Monday.

Though traditionally conservative, Islamic trends are totally absent from the scene in this district. The Islamic Action Front (IAF), which is fielding four candidates in neighbouring Irbid, has none contesting the three Muslim seats allocated for Ramtha and Bani Kenanah.

The 18 candidates (same number as in 1989) are equally divided between the two districts and include in their ranks two former ministers (Mohammed Khatib, former minister of information, and Oaseem Obeidat, former minister of labour, who is also a former deputy), and three former army generals.

On the border with Syria, Ramtha, a city of about 65,000 inhabitants, comprises Ramtha the city and the five villages immediately surrounding it: Turrah, Shajarah, Emrawah, Thneibeh and Bweidah.

The three seats, as was also the case in 1989, are expected to be won by two candidates from Ramtha and one from Bani Kenanah. The race in Ramtha appears to be be-

tween four candidates, Fawaz Zoubi, Ibrahim Samara (Zoubi), Ahmad Khaza'leh and former minister Khatib.

In 1989, Mohammed Dardour and Saleem Zoubi, both from Ramtha, won by 11,734 votes and 5,483 votes respectively. Neither of the two is seeking reelection this time, since the fallahen have decided that a chance should be given to other candidates to reach Parliament this time.

The high number of votes which went to Mr. Dardour were the result of a voter barter agreement formed with the large Obeidat tribe, which has some 25,000 members inhabiting seven villages in this part of the Kingdom.

Three families in Ramtha — Thiabat, Bashaheh and Khaza'leh (who constitute a

total of about 3,000 members in what is called the fallahen of Ramtha) — first chose Mohammed Khatib as their candidate. "Then, they, mainly, the Khaza'leh and Bashaheh, realised that (Mr. Khatib's) clan is too small and they fielded Dr. Ahmad Khaza'leh, a former Ministry of Health employee, against him," said Hassan Sa'ed, a Ramtha resident.

The 6,000-member Zoubi family, which is resident in Ramtha city and distinct from the fallahen, chose one candidate, Ibrahim Samara (Zoubi), a retired general, to represent them. But the former Ramtha mayor, Fawaz Zoubi, decided to try his luck and ran outside the clan's

Thiabat, Bashaheh and Khaza'leh (who constitute a

(Continued on page 3)

Jerash — two incumbents fighting hard

From Mariam M. Shalhin in Jerash

SOME 50 kilometres north of Amman, this city of 120,000 people was once a central part of the Roman empire and home to the scions of human civilisation as it was known 2,000 years ago. Today, the Roman city of Jerash is merely a major tourist spot and Jordan's second most important historical site after Petra.

But beyond the ruins, the pull of tribal ties and urban living have shaped a lively campaign race firmly rooted in a history of diverse political ideology.

Mountain and farmer communities, many of whom are

formed into tribal congregations, have ruled Jerash and its environs, which include some dozen towns for centuries.

As in much of the rest of northern Jordan, people here have been exposed to political movements that were bred in some of the major centres of political thoughts — such as Damascus and Aleppo in Syria as well as Beirut in Lebanon. Pan-Arab ideologies, especially those pertaining to Greater Syria, have traditionally found fertile ground in the north of Jordan.

Known for their individualistic nature, the people of Jerash established a separate government in the early

part of this century. The government of Jerash was ruled by the most powerful clan of the region at the time, the Utoums, who are still clan chiefs in their hometown of Souf. Souf now makes up one of half a dozen major towns in the Jerash district.

But this was Jerash before the creation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Today Jerash is a district which encompasses both the city of Jerash as well as a dozen towns of various sizes around it, two refugee camps and home to the much of the large Bani Hassan tribe. Up to 180,000 people call this district home.

One of the two Palestinian refugee camps is made up

exclusively of Jordanian nationals and the other contains Palestinians who are not Jordanian nationals.

The Souf camp, which contains most of Jerash's voting Palestinians, lies just outside Jerash city and has a population of some 20,000 people. Until Wednesday 3,700 of the 4,000 registered voters in the camp had picked up their voting cards.

The number of registered voters in Jerash are 40,723. Of these 29,567, or 75 per cent, have picked up their cards.

Most observers here do not believe that the number of people who will vote on Nov.

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Islamists expected to retain same number of seats but not clout

By Sa'eda Kilani

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Islamic Action Front (IAF), the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood, might be able to win the same or even higher number of seats in Monday's elections as they had in the 11th Parliament, but Jordan's Islamists are unlikely to retain the same influence they had in the 1989-1993 legislature, analysts and observers say.

The introduction in August of the one-person, one-vote formula into the electoral law was largely expected to alter the shape of the next Parliament by preventing the kind of alliances and voting blocs that enabled the Brotherhood to win 23 seats

in 1989, along with some other 10 supporters and sympathisers.

The movement's political adroitness and its ability to adapt swiftly to the change, however, have rendered that expectation largely inaccurate, the analysts said.

The IAF will fare well in these elections if only because it has "an awesome organisation," said Mustapha Hamameh, director of the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan.

"If they have the kind of organisation that enables them to transfer votes from one candidate to another, then they might maintain their numerical strength in Parliament as before," Dr. Hamameh said.

In terms of organisation, the IAF is said to be the most active, well-equipped and highly-organised political group in the country. The movement's quick and relatively efficient manner in taking part in the registration process, in collecting cards and in providing transportation facilities to its supporters to attend its rallies is a crucial factor in giving it an edge over other political parties and certainly independents, analysts say.

The IAF, some observers believe, is also using other tactics to secure votes in districts or constituencies where it fielded more than one candidate.

The front is believed to have divided their supporters

in favour of one candidate in a certain area and in favour of another in a different area within the same constituency or district, as it is the case in Amman's Second District, for example, or in Zarqa and in Balqa.

There is also the distribution by gender: that is, women voting for one candidate and men voting for another candidate to ensure that both candidates will secure around the same number of votes, which, the front hopes, will be enough to gain victory.

The Islamists' organisational efficiency is also reflected in the manner in which the IAF distributed its candidates in the different constituencies. In certain dis-

tricts (such as Amman's First and Third districts, Jerash, Ajloun, Mafraq, Northern Bedouins, and Tafleh) it has fielded only one candidate. But it has four candidates in what is considered as its strongholds, such as Amman's Fifth District, Balqa and Irbid as well as Karak. It has no candidates in Ramtha, and the Northern Bedouins and Central Bedouins constituencies.

"The Islamists will be losing a minimum number of votes as opposed to all other political groupings and independents," said Taleb Awad, a researcher in the Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre. "If they have good organisation, they will concentrate their votes on powerful

candidates who have good chances of winning."

In addition to its organisational capabilities, observers believe, the IAF have benefitted from the recent measures adopted by the government vis-a-vis the elections. The introduction of the one-person, one vote system was seen as being used for example by the government to lessen the strength of Islamists in the next Parliament. The argument that the government is targeting Islamists is used by many IAF candidates in their rallies and campaigns to attract sympathy votes.

The argument is augmented by the IAF's stand against peace negotiations with Israel which could also

be expected to attract votes from opponents of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy deal.

The IAF has also been using a government ban on public rallies (which was overturned on Oct. 28), the Ministry of Interior's initial rejection of the candidacy of Bassam 'Emoush, a former professor at the University of Jordan (who secured the highest number of votes in elections to the IAF's executive bureau) and the transfer of government employees (some of whom are IAF members) from their places of work to other districts on the charges that they had illegally campaigned for certain candidates.



Moreover, the split in tribal votes witnessed in many constituencies will also be a factor in favour of the IAF. The Brotherhood's experience in political work, unlike most other political parties, and its long record in charitable action and its influence among government and educational institutions are all major factors playing in its favour.

However, in Monday's polls, where the IAF is facing stiff competition from other political groups as well as

(Continued on page 3)

Allies want Libya vote Monday

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The Western allies have asked for a Security Council vote Monday to tighten sanctions against Libya for not surrendering two men accused in the bombing of a Pan Am airliner over Scotland in 1988.

Diplomats said Friday the draft will probably include a grace period to Dec. 1, before sanctions go into effect.

The grace period has been changed several times and may be changed again at the urging of both China and Russia, after Moscow previously threatened to veto the measures for fear Libya would not repay \$4 billion it owes Moscow.

Envoys said the United States, Britain and France had asked council members, in a private session Friday, to vote for the resolution Monday but a formal meeting has not been scheduled while states review the draft.

The draft resolution freezes

Libya's financial assets and bans oil transport and refinery equipment. But it excludes oil production equipment or future revenues from oil sales earned after the draft is adopted.

The three allies gave private assurances to Russia it could, under certain circumstances, tap the frozen assets to help repay the debt, but only if Libya agrees. However, envoys from the three countries flatly denied there was any deal to lend or give Russia the \$4 billion from other funds.

At the moment, diplomats said they anticipated no more than 10 votes in favour, one more than required, even with Russia's support.

The question remains, however, whether the penalties will do any good. If they do not, the United States is threatening to turn the screws further, cutting off Libya's lifeblood, oil.

The sanctions go beyond an air and arms embargo in effect

since April 1992. They include a freeze on financial assets of Libya currently in foreign bank accounts and a ban on its import of some oil equipment. Proceeds from future oil sales would not be touched.

Russia's objection was that the sanctions could prevent the country from repaying \$4 billion debt to Moscow. That is no small issue for Boris Yeltsin, already relying heavily on billions of dollars of Western aid to keep Russia's economy afloat.

Most of the debt is for Russia's military sales to Libya, and Russian military officers apparently continued to resist the new sanctions.

But after winning concessions from the United States, France and Britain — the prime sponsors of the sanctions resolution — and U.S. warnings by President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister John Major of Britain, the Russians are going along.

The resolution was rework-

ed to say Libya would still be obligated to pay off its foreign debt. An informal understanding was also reached that proceeds from future Libyan oil sales, which will not be frozen, would go towards servicing the debt.

And the sanctions will not take effect immediately, but Dec. 1 that gives Libya more time to consider forcing suspects Abdul Basset Ali Al Megrahi and Lamien Khalifa Fhimah, to surrender for trial in the United States and Scotland, where charges are pending.

The United States had wanted the Security Council to impose a full oil embargo against Libya, cutting off a \$10 billion source of foreign currency earnings. But European countries, which rely heavily on Libya's oil exports of 1.5 million barrels daily, objected.

A U.S. official, briefing reporters on condition of anonymity, renewed the threat of an oil embargo as a "next step."

Asians seek entry to Mideast arms market

DUBAI (AFP) — China and other Asian arms producers are seeking a foothold in the lucrative Middle East market, long dominated by the United States and its western allies, regional experts said.

China, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore will display aircraft and related technology alongside the world's arms giants in an air show opening Sunday in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

"It is not a matter of whether they can compete with the United States and other major producers. These countries are exhibiting something different," a Gulf-based military expert said.

Pakistan, a new arms exporter eyeing the growing regional market, is displaying its latest version of the Mushshak jet trainer, which has been tested by the UAE air force, according to organisers of the Nov. 7-11 show in Dubai.

China is displaying its Karakoram K-8 jet trainer, a joint venture with Pakistan. The first 14 K-8s are in production and will enter into service in China and Pakistan this year.

Malaysia and Singapore will exhibit advanced air-related technology while the former will also display its CN-235, a multi-purpose patrol plane produced jointly with Spain's firm CASA.

Fair organisers said over 135 orders have been placed for the aircraft, including seven from the UAE.

Organisers had said they expected major deals to be announced at the show, but it was not clear whether they would involve products from Asian countries. Officials, however, said the fair, the third to be held in Dubai, would showcase the latest in the arms industry.

PKK disowns attacks on Turkish targets in Europe

ISTANBUL (Agencies) — The separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) has denied any involvement in a wave of attacks against Turkish offices across Europe.

"Media reports, particularly in Germany, have asserted that those who carried out the attacks are members of the PKK. There is no truth in these statements," a statement from the PKK European representative said.

The statement faxed to an international news agency said Kurds had carried out the simultaneous assaults on Turkish diplomatic missions, travel agencies, airline offices and other premises on Thursday.

Turkish targets in 28 German cities, as well as in London, Copenhagen, Vienna, Strasbourg, and Switzerland were hit. One Turk died in an arson attack in Wiesbaden, Germany.

"While we see these incidents as a natural and understandable reaction to the massacres and attempted assimilation of our people, we stress that our party had no part in these actions," the statement said.

In Germany, police raided Kurdish offices and apartments across the country on Friday following the wave of attacks. The Interior Ministry said 46 people had been detained on suspicion of carrying out the assaults.

Nearly 450,000 Turkish Kurds and 1.8 million Turks live in Germany.

The PKK and other organisations have been waging a war for an independent Kur-

disb state in southeast Turkey. More than 10,100 people have been killed in Turkey since the PKK began its bloody campaign for independence in 1984.

In Stockholm, Sweden, about 70 Kurds protested outside parliament on Friday, saying police harassed them in two overnight raids prompted by the recent attacks against Turkish targets in Europe.

There were no attacks in Sweden, but police raided Kurdish cultural organisations offices in Stockholm and Upsala Thursday night.

France warns Algeria fundamentalists

PARIS (Agencies) — Interior Minister Charles Pasqua has warned exiled Algerian fundamentalists against making trouble. After a threat by Islamic extremists in Algeria to kill foreigners was made public.

Mr. Pasqua, who runs the police, said that supporters of Algeria's banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) who fled to France to escape repression had best lie low. The door may be closed to new ones trying to enter.

"They must respect our laws," Mr. Pasqua said in a TF-1 television interview.

porting Islamic insurgents fighting to topple the country's military-installed government. They also reflected fear about extremist threats to kill foreign nationals remaining in Algeria.

France, the former colonial power, has the largest community among the 24,000 foreigners in Algeria. The foreigners, mostly working in the oil industry, are vital to the military-installed government's efforts to revive the sinking economy.

In an apparent attempt to give a higher profile to their 21-month insurgency, gunmen have killed seven foreigners in the past month. Three French consular workers were kidnapped and held for a week.

captors stating that there would be no more kidnappings — foreigners in Algeria after a month face "sudden death."

On Thursday, France said that it was reducing its diplomatic staff and urged French families who left last week for a holiday not to return if their presence is "not indispensable."

Air France reported Friday that of the 3,000 people who left Algeria for France for the All Saints Holiday, only 1,500 had reserved seats to return.

Foreign Minister Alain Juppé, interviewed Friday on France-2 television, urged the remaining French "to be cautious, vigilant and keep their nerve so as not to give the terrorists the success they want, seeing the French to leave."

Algerian Prime Minister

Rebha Malek has attributed the hostage-taking to the armed Islamic Group.

It is thought to be the most radical of the scattered groups fighting to topple the government, installed in January 1992 after a military coup. The army cancelled parliamentary elections that Muslim fundamentalists were poised to win.

The ensuing rebellion has killed more than 2,000 people. For the past six months, attacks blamed on Islamic extremists have targeted intellectuals, journalists, and most recently foreigners.

With French schools in Algeria due to resume classes Saturday, fewer than half the 3,000 French nationals who left last weekend had returned by Friday, a spokesman for Air France said.

Suffering of Iraqis beyond description, volunteer doctor says

By Rana Hussein,
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN. — It has been more than two years since the Gulf war over Kuwait ended, but the shadow of war, represented mainly in the United Nations embargo on Iraq, continues to take its toll on the Iraqi people, affecting them mentally and economically, and innocent children bear the brunt, says a doctor who is involved in raising help for the Iraqis.

Nathima H. Atchoo, an American gynaecologist of Iraqi origin, says it is not fair that the 18 million people of Iraq are being punished for the decisions of its leadership.

Dr. Atchoo, speaking to the Jordan Times during a stopover in one of her frequent visits to Iraq, said living conditions of the Iraqi people had deteriorated beyond description.

The doctor visited her homeland in 1989 for the first time since 1968 after becoming an American citizen, and went back there again in June 1993 to find out for herself how the situation was in the country.

"I did not want to visit Iraq at the beginning because I knew I will get emotional, and I would not be able to stand it, but I did, and I witnessed what the Iraqis had suffered because of the embargo," imposed by the U.N. after the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Dr. Atchoo said.

"You hear a lot, but when you see it, it is something different, I felt heartbroken when I went there and learned that the Iraqis were isolated from the rest of the world," she added.

What she saw prompted her to work with a humanitarian committee in the United States to collect money to help alleviate the suffering of the Iraqis, she said. Donors included Arabs as well as Americans, she said.

Dr. Atchoo, who supplemented a \$50,000 consignment of relief supplies — mainly medicine — from the Jordanian market, also carried with her books and journals to Iraq.

Dr. Atchoo feels bitter that the West "is looking at Iraq as one person, and not the 18 million people who are suffering from disease, famine and poverty."

"The Iraq people are being punished in the name of one person," she said. "But that person is not Iraq. Iraq is 18 million people, and this is something humanitarian that needs to be addressed."

Dr. Atchoo, who graduated from Baghdad University in 1955 before migrating to the U.S. recounted several of her "unforgettable" firsthand brushes with the suffering of the Iraqis.

Distributing candies to children in a hospital, she said, she was emotionally overcome when "a two-year-old child who was burning with typhoid lifted his smudged eyes to me and put his hands

up to ask me for candy."

In another hospital, Dr. Atchoo said, she found that half of the beds were empty because most of the children brought there either die there or are taken home simply because the facility did not have any insulin, antibiotics or aspirin.

"People were sleeping on rubber beds because there were no sheets. Surgeons had no on-call surgeries, and they were only allowed to perform emergency operations. They wash the surgical gloves and reuse them until they deteriorate," Dr. Atchoo said.

The small amount of medicine that reaches Iraq, either through donations or bought by the Iraqi government, which has little revenues, is simply not enough to address the needs, she said.

Furthermore, she said, the validity of some of the medicines had expired while some others did not meet the quality requirements.

Dr. Atchoo quoted Iraqi doctors as saying that most of the medicine available at hospitals were bought in the black market at exorbitant prices.

Another problem faced by the hospitals is the lack of spare parts for medical equipment, she said.

In one hospital she visited, none of the eight fetal monitors worked because they were faulty and lacked spare parts. "That is only one hospital, what about the rest?" she said.

Tens of thousands of Iraqi



Nathima H. Atchoo

children have died because of diseases that could have been easily prevented, she said. Typhoid, once almost totally eliminated from Iraq, and other communicable diseases have come back in strength because of the high pollution in Iraqi rivers following the destruction of the sewerage system during the war.

"Every child has typhoid and the hospitals do not have the medicine to treat the disease" despite the exemption of food and medicine from the international sanctions, Dr. Atchoo said.

It will take hundreds of years before the pollution in Iraqi rivers is removed and the water made safe for drinking, she said.

The most vulnerable among the Iraqi children are those between two and three years, according to Dr. Atchoo. They suffer from malnutrition leading to no

protection against many diseases and from vitamin or calcium deficiencies.

According to the doctor, the daily death toll in Iraq is higher than what is actually reported and could be in thousands.

Dr. Atchoo accused the United Nations, the Arab League and the Arab League for voting to maintain the embargo.

"They have destroyed the morality and the character of the whole nation," she said. Theft has become frequent and "people tell you 'kill me if you want but I have to feed my children'."

Dr. Atchoo accused the United Nations of inefficient use of donations and aid for Iraq.

"I call the United Nations 'the united criminals'," she said. "They are thieves. They spend more than half the money in handling and shipping."

As an example, she said, it cost her \$3,000 for 225 vials of insulin while it cost the U.N. \$10,000 to buy and ship 100 vials.

The entire episode of the crisis "cast over Iraq, she asserted, "is a conspiracy of the West and some Arab countries to control the destiny of Iraq."

"It is a policy to bring down the country to its knees, and to control it. That is the way I feel about it. This is the only country in the Middle East that showed the technology, the money, the brains and they destroyed it,"

she said.

"I am an American, and I have the freedom of speech, and I will tell what I hear and what I see, because it is a crime when children are admitted for treatment, hospitals do not even have one drop of insulin; this is the crime," Dr. Atchoo said.

The doctor noted that the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) had warned of famine in Iraq and called for urgent action, but "nothing is being done."

"Every time they (U.N.) come to negotiate to remove the embargo, they create an incident to defray that, and their demands never end," Dr. Atchoo said.

Prices of food and goods in Iraq have increased dramatically since the Gulf war because of the plunge in the value of the Iraqi currency while salaries have remained static.

"Many people are eating one meal a day; and most of them exhausted their life savings and are selling their jewellery and furniture to survive," she said.

Government rations meet less than half the needs of an average Iraqi family, she said.

Dr. Atchoo said she will continue collecting donations for the Iraqi people until the embargo is lifted.

"I know these donations are not much, but to me if we save one life it is worth it," Dr. Atchoo said. "The only other thing we can do is pray."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israeli, Palestinian unions recognise each other

TEL AVIV (R) — The Israeli and Palestinian trade union movement have officially recognised each other, a special adviser to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat said Friday. Dr. Ahmad Tibi said the mutual recognition agreement was reached at a meeting in his home between Israel's Histadrut labour federation and the Palestinian Workers Union. "The two leaderships met this afternoon in my residence in East Jerusalem and the Israelis and Palestinians announced that they recognised each other," he told Reuters. Histadrut Secretary-General Haim Haberfeld also recognised the Palestinian Workers Union in Tunis, Dr. Tibi said. The two sides set up a joint team to resolve disputes and discuss future cooperation, he said.

Iraq slams U.N. envoy for remarks

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq Saturday described a senior U.N. official as a toy in the hands of venomous snakes after he said arms inspectors would probe reports that Baghdad used chemical weapons against Shi'ite Muslims. Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. special commission in charge of scrapping Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, said Wednesday he had no evidence yet that Iraq had used chemical weapons to drive Shi'ite Muslims from marshes in southern Iraq. But he added: "We will investigate to the degree it is technically and practically possible" to do it. "Despite his 'formal neutrality' Mr. Ekeus is like someone who has lost touch with the ground, turning into a toy in the hands of venomous snakes in the East and West." Iraq's state newspaper Al Junhouriyyah said in a front-page signed editorial. "He rushes to any his saying Iraq did this or that," the paper added.

Somalia task force chief named

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Former U.S. ambassador to the European Community James Dobbins has been appointed head of a new task force on Somalia. Secretary of State Warren Christopher asked Mr. Dobbins to return to government service from his post at the Rand Corp. research group ahead of the scheduled withdrawal of U.S. peacekeepers from Somalia March 31. Mr. Dobbins is one of several officials Mr. Christopher has assigned to direct U.S. diplomacy in regional trouble spots. "It's a very useful technique to have task forces in charge of various areas. It enables people to concentrate on them," Mr. Christopher said in a congressional hearing Friday. The pullout has raised concerns about the fate of the U.N. efforts to restore peace to Somalia, but the secretary said it was a "well-balanced decision" that avoids a quick withdrawal and leaves time for talks on reaching a political settlement. Meanwhile, U.S. envoy Robert Oakley left Mogadishu after working out an agreement between Somali clan leaders to attend a conference on assistance to Somalia at the end of November in Ethiopia.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

773111-19
PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 ... Film: "Comme Un Bateau"
18:00 ... News in French
19:15 ... Fenetre Sur
19:30 ... News in Hebrew
20:00 ... News in Arabic
20:30 ... You Bet Your Life
21:10 ... ThirtySomething
22:00 ... News in English
22:30 ... Documentary
23:10 ... The Golden Palace

PRAYER TIMES

04:34 ... Fajr
05:52 ... (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:19 ... Dhuhr
14:20 ... Asr
16:46 ... Maghrib
18:05 ... Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish, Tel. 610740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 627085
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 61757
Trinitarian Church Tel. 623346

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 62541
Anglican Church Tel. 63051, Tel. 62643
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assiout International Church Tel. 625236
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 634328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 641193
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 654933
Church of Nazareth Tel. 627669

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Moderate weather conditions will prevail and winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 11/25
Aqaba 17/32
Desert 8/26
Jordan Valley 20/32
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 25, Aqaba 31. Humidity readings: Amman 51, per cent. Aqaba 32 per

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Yousef Al Faqih 756988
Dr. Fakhri Tayeh 603680
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad 846070
Dr. Basim Qaddumi 640633
First pharmacy 681812
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Naroushi pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 626730
Yacoub pharmacy 649445
Shimshari pharmacy 637640
Najih pharmacy 648632

IRBID:

Dr. Ahmad Qana 611111
Alquds pharmacy 611111

ZARQA:

Dr. Issa Al Omari 901266
Khalifah pharmacy 985137

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 607111

AMMAN:

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Rescue Police 192, 6211, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 898390
Traffic Police 843402
Public Security Department 62021
Hotel Complaints 602800
Prior Complaints 661176
Water and Sewage 897467
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 637055
Central Amman Telephone 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53300
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 06-53300

HOSPITALS

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA

INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)3301-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:35 ... Damascus (RJ)
06:50 ... Doha (RJ)
07:15 ... Athens, Frankfurt (RJ)
07:30 ... Vienna (RJ)
07:45 ... Athens, Frankfurt (RJ)
08:00 ... Vienna (RJ)
08:15 ... Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
08:30 ... Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
08:45 ... Cairo (RJ)
08:50 ... Jeddah (RJ)
09:00 ... Jeddah (RJ)
09:15 ... Bangkok (RJ)
09:30 ... Doha (RJ)
09:45 ... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
10:00 ... Cairo (RJ)
10:15 ... Paris, Brussels (RJ)
10:30 ... London (RJ)
10:45 ... Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
11:00 ... Vienna (RJ)
11:15 ... Frankfurt (RJ)
11:30 ... Rome (RJ)
11:45 ... Frankfurt, Athens (RJ)
12:00 ... Moscow (SU)
12:15 ... Larnaca (CY)
12:30 ... Cairo (MS)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:25 ... Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
14:25 ... Moscow (SU)
19:40 ... Larnaca (CY)
19:45 ... Beirut (ME)
20:05 ... Cairo (MS)
22:30 ... Istanbul (TA)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:30 ... Beirut (RJ)
06:45 ... Frankfurt (RJ)
06:50 ... Cairo, Rome (RJ)
07:05 ... Athens, Frankfurt (RJ)
07:20 ... Vienna (RJ)
07:35 ... Athens, Frankfurt (RJ)
07:50 ... Vienna (RJ)
08:05 ... Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
08:20 ... Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
08:35 ... Cairo (RJ)
08:50 ... Jeddah (RJ)
09:05 ... Jeddah (RJ)
09:20 ... Bangkok (RJ)
09:35 ... Doha (RJ)
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11:20 ... Frankfurt (RJ)
11:35 ... Rome (RJ)
11:50 ... Frankfurt, Athens (RJ)
12:05 ... Moscow (SU)
12:20 ... Larnaca (CY)
12:35 ... Cairo (MS)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

13:30 ... Doha, Bahrain (GF)
14:05 ... Moscow (SU)
18:25 ... Larnaca (CY)
20:05 ... Cairo (MS)

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 760/450
Banana 680
Banana (Mukammal) 680
Beans 550/350
Cabbage 150/100
Carrot 320/220
Cauliflower 280/200
Cucumber 240/160
Cucumbers (large) 150/100
Cucumbers (small) 200/120
Eggplant 250/180
Garlic 600/400
Grapes 550/400
Grape Fruit 180/120
Guava 400/300
Lemon 200/100
Marrow (large) 150/100
Marrow (small) 200/120
Mushrooms 300/200
Onion (green) 200/120
Onion (dry) 280/200
Pepper (hot) 180/120
Pepper (sweet) 220/160
Potato 300/200
Tomato 280/200
Spinach 320/220



MESSAGE FROM SENEGAL: His Majesty King Hussein Saturday receives a message from Senegal's president, Abdou Diouf, delivered to him by Senegal's Ambassador to Kuwait Abdul Rahman Ambaki who was on a visit to the Kingdom. During the audience at the Royal Court, the King and the envoy reviewed current regional and international issues.

NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Tunisian leader

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday sent a cable of good wishes to President Zein Al Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia on the anniversary of his assuming the presidency. The King wished Mr. Ben Ali continued good health and happiness and further progress for the Tunisian people.

Nov. 14 is public holiday

AMMAN (Petra) — All government departments and public institutions will observe a public holiday on Sunday Nov. 14, marking His Majesty King Hussein's birthday, according to a statement from the Prime Ministry Saturday.

Team to participate in population conference in Indonesia

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will participate in a non-aligned nations population conference due to open in Indonesia on Tuesday. The conference, which is part of preparations for an international conference on population to be held in Cairo next year,

will review population issues in the non-aligned nations. A two-member team to the week-long conference leaves for Indonesia today (Sunday).

Petroleum union cooperation accord signed

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation representing the General Jordanian Federation of Workers in the Petrochemical Industry has returned from a 10-day visit to Egypt where they signed a protocol paving the way for cooperation in union-related affairs. Under the agreement, 15 Jordanian workers will be sent to Egypt for a two-week training course on unionist work at the Cairo-based Petroleum Union Institute.

Jordan takes part in major FAO conference

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan is taking part in the general conference by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) which opened in Rome Saturday. Agriculture Minister Marwan Kamal is attending the meetings which will focus on current and future food and agriculture situations around the world. The 20-day conference will also discuss means of involving women in rural development and discuss a 1994-1995 plan for FAO's operations.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ☆ Exhibition of recent paintings by artist Ammar Khammash at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh. Also showing, the permanent exhibition (Saturday-Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.).
- ☆ Art exhibition by a group of artists at Orfali Art Gallery (telephone 643251/2).
- ☆ Art exhibition by artist Mustafa Ali at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ☆ Art exhibition by artist Sa'di Al Ka'bi at Alia Art Gallery (9:30-13:30 and 1500-1800).

- ☆ Art exhibition by artist Mohammad Al Jalous at the French Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Art exhibition by artist Mohammad Abu Zraiq entitled "Views" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Exhibition of ceramics and coloured glass by artists Khalid Mahafzah and Basel Tarawneh at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILMS

- ☆ Film entitled "The Seven Samurai" at the American Center at 5:00 p.m. (207 minutes; in Japanese with English subtitles).

LECTURES

- ☆ Lecture entitled "The Crisis of the Palestinian National Identity: Factors and Challenges" by Dr. Bayan Al Hoot at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6:00 p.m.

King urges all voters to exercise right

(Continued from page 1)

cerpts of the King's address: "I am pleased to meet with you today and to welcome you in your home, the home of all Jordanians of various origins to discuss together issues of concern to the Centre for Studies on Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights."

"We have designed this centre as a genuine tributary, enriching our democratic march through studies and research that would open new horizons and pave the way for its endeavours to spread and take root in the conscience and souls of people at a time when we witness numerous freedom fighters in the Arab Nation continually suffering from oppression, deprivation and pursuit."

"The world around us is now at the threshold of a new cultural phase that has not yet assumed its full dimensions, a world in which we witness harbingers of civil and ethnic conflicts that reflect the tendency towards hegemony and aggression and infringement on the human rights and dignity in many parts of the world. These facts place us all face to face with our responsibilities and our true and firm conviction of the need to ensure the respect of human freedom, dignity and rights regardless of colour, race or creed."

"I wish to reassert my full conviction that no nation can face the challenges, escape darkness, oppression and ignorance and attain enlightenment and knowledge without freedom, democracy and respect of human rights."

"As far as I remember I have told you in our first meet-

ing that the mission of your centre is enhancing the Jordanian democratic experiment, unbridling the potentials of intellectuals and creative people who could help build the complete model of political, social and cultural democracy. "We would like these elements to create in this centre a clear vision of the future which we can employ to serve as a springboard for a comprehensive pan-Arab movement that would take the lead in resuming the Arab renaissance, which always served as the main axis of the Great Arab Revolt."

"It is our duty to pursue the efforts with a firm faith and with a will that has no room for weakness or slackness. We hope to see the idea of this centre and its project transformed into concrete reality, affecting our life and our stands and our visions and concepts of freedom, democracy and human rights."

"We live in an age in which we witness human rights, freedom and dignity facing threat or aggression. "It is enough here to point to the Israeli authorities recent decision to consider the Islamic Holy shrines in Jerusalem as part of the land of Israel, placing these sites under Israeli sovereignty."

"What aggression on human rights, freedom and dignity can be more cruel than confiscating sacred sites and places of worship?"

"I have stated more than once that the shrines and places of worship should only be subject to God's sovereignty alone and should remain as a haven for all believers in God, the followers of the three monotheistic religions. No one

should have absolute sovereignty over these holy places as this is totally rejected by all international principles and laws."

"Perhaps it is a good omen that we meet today while the homeland is preparing for general elections on Monday. I seize this good opportunity to send to all citizens in Jordan my greetings, my appreciation and deep pride as companions of my lifetime march and my struggle."

"The Jordanian people never shirked a duty nor did they ever spare a sacrifice or bow their heads except to God."

"Addressing them from this place and a position of one with responsibility and experience I reaffirm that genuine and good citizenship requires from them all to exercise their right in electing those who represent them in Parliament. "Any failure in exercising this right is regarded as shirking of national responsibility and abandoning the nation's higher interests. Failure to participate in the elections is not becoming Jordanians who are known to have upheld duty with honour."

"If we are so keen on performing our duty and exercising our rights in electing deputies because this is a national and sacred duty, it is more important and for us to let our consciences and our minds decide on the elite of people who truly deserve to be the representatives of the Jordanian people to be entrusted with our national interests."

"Based on this assumption our choice should be free from any influence, and rising above petty personal and selfish interests and emanating from the sense of national responsibility

which places the homeland's interests above all other considerations."

"If we are truly oriented to safeguard the higher national interests and our national unity and our democratic march, then we should show all this in our behaviour during the process of voting by exercising self-control and through gentle character. We should be keen on upholding the elements on which this homeland has been founded, displaying our tolerance, brotherly love, cohesion, wisdom and rationality and cordiality."

"So let us proceed, with God's blessing, and let us choose those from amongst us who are known for their integrity, purity, faithfulness and belonging to the homeland. Let us act with a high degree of keenness and astuteness lest we be taken in by loud voices or false slogans."

"Let me reaffirm to all my Jordanian brothers and free men and women that these elections like the previous ones will be a model of integrity and fairness. I guarantee for all the Jordanians that the elections will be as they were before."

"Let us proceed towards our sacred national duty with tranquil souls and undisturbed conscience and with open and alert minds. "Let our proud people come out and appear in this day of democracy and let us serve as an example and a model of conduct in protecting the achievements of the homeland which we have built with patience, toil and sacrifice. Let us live up to the expectations of our nation which looks towards our march with hope and admiration of which we are worthy."

Transformations in Mideast will be influenced by nature, quality of women's participation in society — Queen

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor was the keynote speaker at a conference on Middle Eastern women in New York Friday. Organised by Teachers College Columbia University, the two-day conference, entitled "Transformations: Women and Change in the Middle East," sought to provide a framework for discussion, illumination and understanding of the changing role of women in the Middle East.

The participants were prominent speakers involved in women's issues in the Middle East, including academics, commentators, analysts and international organisation leaders.

In her address, Queen Noor said that the subject of the conference was "crucial to the social and political transformations under way in the Middle East," and "timely because at this defining moment of change for the region, these transformations will be deeply influenced by the expanded nature and quality of women's participation in society."

She also pointed out that

the impressive "sustained developmental gains of the last several decades can be directly attributed to women's enhanced education, activism, and community participation."

"The last three generations of our women have taken advantage of new opportunities presented successively by national independence, development and political liberalisation," the Queen said.

"At the family and community level, women have played a central role in changing their society; in turn, society has offered them opportunities to broaden their personal and professional activities and to heighten their aspirations," she added.

The Queen said that "the women of the Middle East are likely to play increasingly important roles as catalysts of change, national reconciliation and solidarity, and as agents of stability and development."

Queen Noor emphasised the value of "the traditional woman's role as the anchor of the family." "This pivotal

role has probably been the single most important factor for social stability and communal identity in Middle Eastern cultures," she said.

In addition, she highlighted the need for the West to address the status of Middle Eastern women in the context of their own social and cultural structure. This includes eliminating the stereotypes of the peoples of the Middle East and of Islam.

After all, the Queen said, "many of the personal rights that women in the West obtained during the last two centuries were guaranteed to and practised by Muslim women over 1,400 years ago."

Accompanying Queen Noor to the conference were Her Royal Highnesses Prince Talal Bin Mohammad and Princess Ghida Talal, Jordan's Ambassador to the United Nations Adnan Abu Odeh and Mrs. Abu Odeh, Senator Leila Sharaf, and the Queen's mother, Mrs. Doris Halaby. Also present was Mrs. Boutros Ghali and other members of the diplomatic corps.



RSCN to publish book on birds of Middle East

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) announced Saturday that it will soon publish a book on the birds of Jordan and the Middle East with funding from the World Bank's Global Environment Facility.

The announcement was made by RSCN Director Maher Abu Jaafar upon the conclusion of a visit to Jordan by Richard Porter, an expert from the Bird Life International organisation.

The book will cover the most important community of birds settled in the Middle East and the migrant birds passing through the region, including Jordan, said Mr. Abu Jaafar.

Also, planned by the RSCN is a series of schemes that would be implemented in the Kingdom in cooperation with Bird Life International, said Mr. Abu Jaafar in a statement to the Jordan Times.

During his five-day stay here, Mr. Porter who also works for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in the United Kingdom, toured several regions.

According to Adnan Budeiri of the RSCN, who accompanied Mr. Porter on the tour, the British expert registered a large number of birds as a result of his visits to the Jordan Valley, Azraq, Khirbet Al Samra and several RSCN wildlife reserves.

He said that Birds Life International plans to sign an agreement with the RSCN on cooperation in the field of protecting birds in Jordan and the Middle East.

Mr. Porter was briefed by the RSCN on its bird conservation committee which encouraged the hobby, particularly among school children. He also discussed cooperation with RSCN President Anis Muasher.

No government interference

(Continued from page 1)

commitment to the peace process was one of Jordan's constants and that the unity between Jordan and the West Bank in 1950 was not in contradiction with Palestinian rights at all.

He said that if the Palestinians decide to take part in the elections somewhere else in the future, then they will have to decide whether to abandon the Jordanian nationality or

not and we will not interfere."

On Palestinian differences over the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement, Dr. Majali pointed out that those who reject it "adopt a childish attitude." They reject the Palestinian deal while they accept the Jordanian-Israeli agenda for peace talks, he said. "This confusion that some of them have is mainly due to their belief that the Palestinians won't obtain their rights," he said.

Peres

(Continued from page 1)

The Israeli daily Hadashot said Friday that Chief-of-Staff Ehud Barak led a delegation to talks with Syrians in Cyprus recently. But the report was officially denied.

Israeli Health Minister Chaim Ramon told the Haaretz newspaper: "We are in permanent negotiations with the Syrians and the United States and Egypt are associated with that. The two countries pass on messages."

A Syrian newspaper Saturday condemned secret talks between Arabs and Israel and said it would do all it could to stop such contacts.

The official Syrian daily Tishreen, which reflects government thinking, said Damascus had refused several offers and "temptations" to engage in secret talks with Israel outside the two-year-old U.S.-brokered peace process.

"Syria, while affirming its commitment to the peace process... repeats today its firm rejection for holding any secret talks with Israel at any level," Tishreen said.

"Syria at the same time finds it bad that any other Arab party make such useless contacts because experience of the near past has shown working in darkness was nothing but a catastrophe for Arabs," it added.

"Syria would not bargain on a principle. Withdrawal should be total. Peace should be comprehensive and security should be given to all," Tishreen said. "Syria will not slip into the channels and dark tunnels of secret talks."

It said Syria had persuaded Washington of the need to continue the formal peace process.

New gas, diesel turbines to increase power generation

AMMAN (J.T.) — A consortium of Franco-Japanese firms Saturday won a contract from the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) to procure and install three gas and diesel-driven turbines to boost electric power generation. JEA Director Mohammad Saeed Arafah told the Jordan Times that the JD30 million project will be financed partly from a \$15 million French soft loan and partly from JEA resources and local borrowing.

One of the turbines will be installed at Rishah, the main natural gas field in the country; the other two will be installed at Arbab, some 35 kilometres north of Zarqa, and will be driven by diesel oil, said Mr. Arafah.

Together, he said, the three turbines will produce 90 megawatts of electric power which is to be fed into the national grid.

With the installation of the gas-driven turbine at Rishah, the JEA will have installed four turbines which together are expected to produce a total of 20 per cent of Jordan's electric power needs, according to Mr. Arafah.

At present, the three gas driven turbines at Rishah produce more than 13 per cent of the country's power needs.

As for the two turbines at Arbab, they will help meet the growing power needs of Irbid and Ma'raqah governorates, added Mr. Arafah.

Asked when the three turbines will be installed and ready to operate, he said he expected the installation work to be completed by the end of 1994.

Mr. Arafah added that the JEA was going ahead with plans to operate the second stage of the Aqaba Thermal Power Station due to be completed by 1996.

The Aqaba station, has two gas turbines currently producing 130 megawatts of electric power, but the second stage would increase power generation by at least 10 per cent to cope with the growing demand resulting from the southern region's economic growth.

Islamists are not running in a tribal district

(Continued from page 1)

consensus. "Fawaz is reportedly spending a lot of money on the campaign which is going to backfire on him and the Zoubis whose majority appears to be in favour of Ibrahim," according to one observer of the campaign in Ramtha.

The only Jordanian of Palestinian origin contesting a seat in Ramtha is Romel Abdul Nabi (Duweikat), an architect whose chances in this district of tribal affiliations appear to be slim. "Only because they (the Palestinians) wanted to avoid pressure from the other candidates, that they fielded one of their own," said Mohammad Na'eem, a farmer from Ramtha. "Abdul Nabi does not stand a chance: There are not enough Palestinians to vote for him around here."

Suleiman Ubeidallah, an orthopaedic surgeon residing in Amman, is the candidate of the "independents" as they are called in Ramtha, which number about 1,300. The "independents" are those who belong to neither the Zoubis nor the fallahs.

Hassan Shoubul, a lawyer, comes from the village of Shajarah, where there are a lot of Zoubis who are expected to vote in favour of Ibrahim Samara.

Fawaz Hassan Rabee, Saleh Tawalbeh and Saleh Darabseh, who come from

relatively small families, are expected to win only the votes of their immediate relatives.

In Bani Kenanah, which comprises 18 villages, seven of which are predominantly Obeidat (10,000 eligible voters), Talal Obeidat, also a retired army general, is the candidate favoured by many and most likely to secure a seat.

Dr. Oaseem Obeidat, the former deputy and minister of labour, rejected the results of the preliminary elections held by the Obeidats which resulted in the choice of Talal Obeidat and decided to run independently.

"Oaseem did not respect the democratic method which we adopted, and which is the same that got him to Parliament in 1989. He won by 9,200 votes, which means

that relatively all of us voted in his favour," said a member of the Obeidats.

The seven other candidates in Bani Kenanah include three from the Melkawi family (which number about 3,000), Issam, Usama and Ahmad; Talal Daman from a small village called Hakem, Ahmad Ekesh from Um Qais, and Saleh Tawalbeh from Saham.

"The mere fact that they all come from small families is an indication that their chances in winning are extremely slim," as one observer said.

Thus the strongest candidates in the district appear to be Mohammad Khatib, Ibrahim Samara and Talal Obeidat. Second favourites include Fawaz Zoubi, Oaseem Obeidat and Ahmad Khaza'leh.

Islamists likely to retain seats

(Continued from page 1)

from independent Islamists, it is difficult for the Brotherhood to gain the same influence it had in the 11th Parliament.

The IAF, experts say, will have to concentrate its votes on specific candidates at the expense of its supporters from the Islamic stream or from other affiliations. This will consequently reduce the front's chances of bringing more supporters to Parliament.

In addition, the IAF will

have to face strong competition from independent Islamists and will have to eliminate competition between IAF candidates themselves in the same district.

"If the Islamists' influence is lessened in parliament, then this will be a victory for all other political groupings in the country," one expert said. "But if IAF is able to retain the same number of seats, then this will be a blow to the change in the election law and all other procedures taken to weaken their chances."

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هكذا صنع الاصل

Jordan Times

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Different House, one agenda

THERE IS no doubt in anybody's mind that the 12th Parliament which Jordanians will elect tomorrow will be different from its predecessor, in both strength and composition. That much has already been made clear by the direction, or lack of it, of the election campaigns that ended officially last night.

The role of the Lower House has since 1989 been determined gradually, and ironically, by the 11th Parliament itself, which gave the government a large say on determining the kind of key laws that regulate the democratic experiment and other aspects of running the affairs of state.

The previous Parliament planted the seeds of its weakness with its own hands. Laws pertaining to the regulation of Political Parties and the Press were basically designed by the government but were passed by the 11th Parliament with little opposition.

The one-person, one-vote amendment to the Election Law will most probably limit the influence of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) and like-minded political groups that oppose the peace process. Had that single amendment not been introduced, the IAF could have been able to lead a coalition of rejectionists who would have made any peace agreement with Israel impossible. With a weakened anti-peace camp in tomorrow's Parliament, the government, any future government, would have a simpler task pursuing a peace option that would minimise the damage to Jordan and place the country's interests on top of its agenda. Surely it would be very difficult for any government to negotiate the future of the country with Israel, the U.S. and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) with a House breathing "no-peace" down its neck.

But with the majority of the new deputies expected to support the peace process, the government and the House could also make it a point to work harder for enhancing democracy. This task should not be lost in the exchange of blame and rhetoric over the peace process. Our parliamentarians must understand that the leadership will use its negotiating skills to ensure that peace in the region will be in the interest of Jordan and the Arab Nation at large. Reasonable opposition in Parliament will certainly help the government in its task.

Meanwhile, the new House needs to recognise at the outset of its four-year term that its main duty is to consolidate and enhance the country's democratic process and institutions. While Parliament can do little to change policy on strategic objectives of the state, it can achieve a great deal of progress on the internal front, particularly in terms of progressive legislation and in institution-building. The coming four years will be crucial for Jordan, the Palestinians and the region. Neither Parliament, nor the government should spend these years on unnecessary squabbles and futile arguments that would not in the end have to concern us.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Saturday said that the real battle with the enemy is being fought at the political level and therefore the Arabs and the Palestinians have to exert all efforts to win it by ensuring the greatest gains. The Arabs realise now that a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict does not guarantee all their rights because the whole world is supporting the Israelis and continues to condone its arrogance and support its military superiority over the Arab Nation. We went to Madrid at the start of the peace process for the purpose of ensuring the implementation of U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 and under the impression that the world community is now inclined to favour peace over war and to implement the international legitimacy, said the paper. Therefore, the paper said, our aspiration for peace is legitimate and our endeavours to ensure a lasting settlement are a national requirement. For this reason, added the paper, the Jordanians, the Palestinians, the Syrians and the Lebanese are determined to pursue the negotiations with the Israelis and with the world community at large in order to reach an acceptable peace formula that would bring about security and stability and ensure the return of Arab rights.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour Saturday demanded that the Arab Nation halt any moves towards normalisation of relations with the Israelis until they have withdrawn all their forces from the occupied Arab lands. Mohammad Kawash said that nothing has been done towards achieving real peace despite the signing of the PLO-Israeli deal. Everything seems to have remained untouched although the Israelis have succeeded, to some extent, in opening the door for normalising its relations with Arab countries and opening talks aimed at economic cooperation, said the writer. Not a single Israeli soldier has been pulled out from the Arab territories at a time when Israel seems to be determined to redeploy its troops on occupied Arab land instead of withdrawing them under the pretext that it wants to provide protection to the Jewish settlements, the writer pointed out. In light of this situation, and as we witness Israel planting mines in the path of peace, it is incumbent on the Arab governments to stop displaying good intentions until the Israeli government has yielded not only to the PLO demands but also those along the other Israeli-Arab tracks.

Sunday Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

U.N. report should serve as incentive for bettering life in Jordan

According to the tables presented in the World Human Development Report (1993), issued by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the per capita gross national product (GNP) in Jordan was estimated at \$1,640, which places Jordan in a respectable place among nations. Two thirds of human beings are poorer than we are, while one third of mankind is richer. Our place on an accelerating scale of 100 in per capita income is at the point of 66.6.

The poorest people in the world are the Mozambique people, and the richest are the Swiss. Among the Arab countries, and the people of Somalia are at the bottom of the list, with an average of \$170 per capita, and the people of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are at the top with an average annual income of \$18,430 per capita. Thus, the income of an average UAE national equals the income of 108 Somali citizens or 11 Jordanians.

However, the per capita income is but one factor in the human development. The international human development index gave the following indicators for Jordan:

Among 160 countries covered by the report, Jordan is in the 86th position. Average life expectancy at birth is 66.9 years. Eighty point one per cent of adults are able to read and write, the average gross domestic product (GDP) per capita after adjustment for purchasing power parity (PPP) is \$2,415 and the overall index of human development in Jordan is 58.6 per cent.

The report states that 97 per cent of the Jordanian population have access to medical services, 99 per cent have drinkable water and that the average Jordanian consumes food enough to give him 118 per cent of the calories required. The purchasing power of money in Jordan is 47.3 per cent higher than the world average, therefore the per capita income of \$1,640 is actually equivalent to \$2,415 because the price level of goods and services in Jordan is lower than the worldwide level by 32.1 per cent.

Comparing Jordan's human situation in 1990 to what it used to be 30 years ago, the report concluded that the average life of the Jordanian increased by 42.6 per cent, infant mortality rate declined by 76 per cent, the food calories intake rose by 26.9 per cent and the per capita income rate by 115.6 per cent in real terms, i.e., after allowing for inflation, an improvement

of 2.6 per annum.

If we compare Jordan's human state of affairs with that of the industrialised countries in the North, we find that the average Jordanian has 90 per cent of life expectancy, 88 per cent of the nutritional calories, 82 per cent of education, 16 per cent of the gross domestic product, 12 per cent of gross national product, 50 per cent of the educational years, 11 per cent of the nurses per one thousand of population, 33 per cent of family planning, 37 per cent of contraceptives, 40 per cent of medical doctors, and 16 per cent of the newspaper circulation relative to population.

The report estimated that each 1,000 Jordanians (or 150 families) own 252 radios, 77 television sets and 53 copies of daily newspapers.

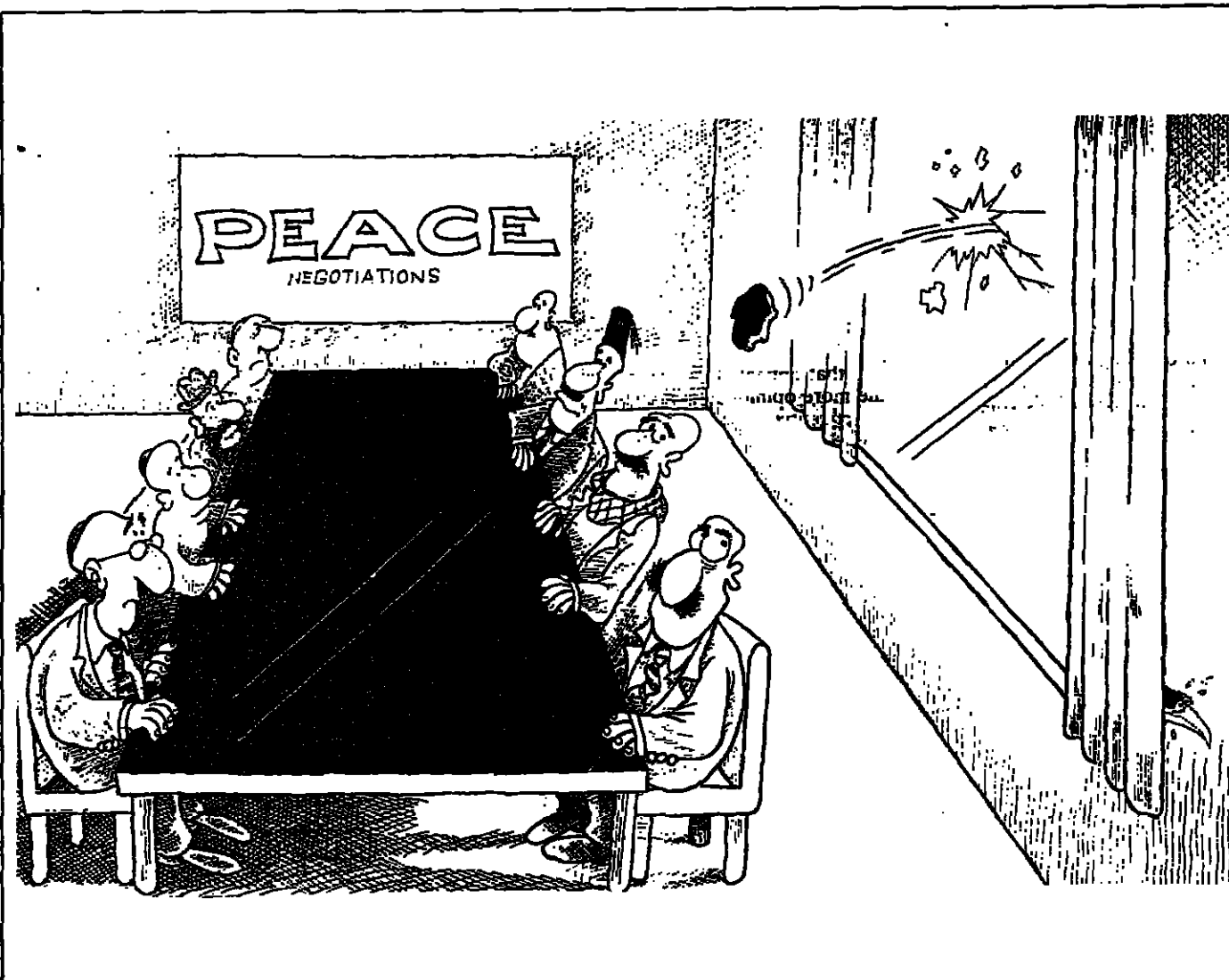
The population under the line of poverty is estimated at 17 per cent, the ratio of public expenditure on education is 5.9 per cent, on public health 2.7 per cent. The foreign aid received by Jordan amounts to 16.7 per cent of GNP (1990) or \$221 per capita (1989). Jordan's foreign indebtedness was 181 per cent of GNP (1989), which put Jordan on the sixth place in indebtedness and the first if you exclude African debtor countries.

The report found that there are 2.1 soldiers for each teacher, or 26 soldiers for each physician. Taxes take 15.3 per cent of GNP (1989) and direct taxes make 13.4 per cent of total taxes.

This in summary is the state of affairs of human development in Jordan. In this respect, Jordan ranks as number one among non oil Arab countries, but ranks as number 10 among all Arab countries.

Of course, there is large room for improvement and further development. It is not good enough to say that Jordan today is far better than it used to be several decades ago. This should be taken for granted. The comparison must be made with other countries which improved also, some of them faster than we did.

The United Nations' annual report on the state of all countries of the world regarding human development will work as an effective incentive to speed up the race for better life for the people.



ADL rallies to subvert Mideast peace

By Jeffrey Steinberg

The following article is reprinted from the Oct. 22 issue of Washington Weekly Executive Intelligence Review:

Where the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (ADL) really stands on the issue of Middle East peace was answered on Oct. 10 at the Gateway Marriott Hotel in Crystal City, Virginia. Under the auspices of the American Leadership Conference, a collection of ADL operatives and hangers-on gathered to rail against the Rabin-Arafat accord and to launch a drive to reinstall the Likud Party in power under the direction of Benjamin Netanyahu, a staunch opponent of the land-for-peace plan. Among the speakers were several with longstanding ADL ties:

— Dr. Uri Ra'anana, the patron of convicted Israeli-Soviet spy Jonathan Jay Pollard and the one-time Israeli intelligence liaison to B'nai B'rith. Dr. Ra'anana, who was recruited and trained by British intelligence in the 1950s before migrating to Israel, headed the national security studies programme at the Fletcher School of Diplomacy at Tufts University in the late 1970s and shepherded both Pollard and ADL operative Mira Lansky Boland into jobs with Naval Intelligence and the CIA, respectively. In the early 1980s Dr. Ra'anana, then with the Israeli embassy in Washington, was caught setting up a Mossad spy ring at B'nai B'rith headquarters. Dr. Ra'anana has been a frequent lecturer at ADL-sponsored seminars on

Arab terrorism.

Rael Jean Isaac, a founder of Americans for a Sate Israel, an author frequently published by the ADL, and a speaker at ADL forums on terrorism. For years Mrs. Isaac and her husband worked closely with John Rees, a British-born spook who acknowledges that his front group, the Maldon Institute, is heavily bankrolled by the ADL.

Yosser Bodansky, a one-time analyst for Israeli Air Force Intelligence and currently the director of the House Republican Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare. Mr. Bodansky is also the director of Middle East analysis at Rees's Maldon Institute and penned a March 1993 propaganda tome called Target America: Terrorism in the U.S. Today, based on information fed to him by hardliners inside the Israeli Defence Force who are seeking to foment a holy war against Islam. The same IDF intelligence channels authored a December 1992 report that was published by the ADL claiming that the United States was harbouring Islamic fundamentalist terrorist networks.

Other speakers at the rally for war included: Midge Decter, Eugene Rostow, Douglas Feith and Harvey Friedman. Mr. Friedman was a vice president of the America-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) until last summer, when he was forced to resign over a four-mouthed public attack against Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin, a leading go-between in the secret talks with the PLO.

Familiar role for ADL

The presence of so many ADL fellow-travellers at the neo-conservative anti-peace rally is hardly a surprise. As early as 1975, the ADL was engaged in a vicious propaganda war against political economist Lyndon LaRouche because of his proposal for a durable peace in the Middle East based on economic development. Mr. LaRouche travelled to Baghdad in the spring of 1975 and later held a series of meetings in New York City with senior Israeli government officials, including Foreign Minister and U.N. Ambassador Abba Eban, to discuss details of his economic development plan. ADL considered this treachery and spent millions of dollars to smear Mr. LaRouche as an anti-Semite and seek his elimination.

Since January 1993, evidence has surfaced as a result of a San Francisco police probe that the ADL carried out the same kind of dirty tricks against hundreds of political and civil rights groups and tens of thousands of activists. Many targets of the ADL are Jewish peace activists, including Yigal Arens, son of former Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens, and leaders of American Friends of Peace Now and New Jewish Agenda. All these groups advocated some variant on the land-for-peace solution to the Israel-Palestine crisis that is now being pursued by the Rabin government and Yasser Arafat.

Any thoughts of peace were absent at the Crystal City symposium. Speaker after speaker

rose to denounce the Rabin-Arafat accord and at least five members of the Jewish Defence League were allowed to speak from the floor in support of the policy of "mass transfers," i.e., the forced violent expulsion of all Palestinians from the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Israel.

Mrs. Isaac screamed that even the Camp David Accords were too much, arguing that Egypt was the most anti-Semitic country in the world and that President Hosni Mubarak had broken every clause of Camp David.

Midge Decter called any talk of peace "sinful." Only a massive Israeli military deterrent, she argued, can keep peace with a permanently hostile Arab World. "Animosity" is the only path to security, she said.

Despite the rhetoric, the general mood among the 500 or so Zionist hardliners who attended the event was demoralisation over the dramatic progress towards peace and the apparent widespread support the Rabin-Arafat agreements have won among Israelis and Palestinians alike.

The ADL meeting is, however, a warning for those who are toying with the idea of bringing in the World Bank or other wreckers-institutions to direct the economic features of the accord. If the peace process falters, there are plenty of zealots, like the ADLers who gathered at the Marriott, who are prepared to take any steps, including terrorism and provoking regional war, to prevent the realisation of peace in the Middle East.

LETTERS

Selective elections?

To the Editor:

Though the freedom of the individual is prized above all in a democratic society, our experience of democratic elections is proving otherwise. The freedom of the individual seems to be a superficial kind of freedom. We are two kinds of people: those who are dominating and those who are dominated.

We, as individuals, are still ruled by attitudes which exhibit themselves in such forms as racial characteristic, class prejudices, public opinion, etc., so much so that little originality and personal courage are to be found in each individual's decision on who to elect. X votes for Y because he is a friend of the family, or because he is of the same ethnic background, the same class or the same creed. Little consideration is given to the candidate's merits, beliefs, honesty and dedication to serve the country and its people.

Are we so dominated by group psychology and group authority that we can no longer truly practise our own right of freedom of choice? I am not suggesting that one should detach from one's own group to the point of alienation. What I am advocating is that each individual should recognise as well as practise his or her right to be free from all kind of domination over true, and not superficial, freedom of intellect, without which anyone's vote is worthless.

We are being faced with not only an intellectual challenge, but also with a challenge that has serious political, social and economic consequences. We have a great responsibility towards our society and ourselves and that can only be met when and if we start taking responsibility for our own decisions and choices. Rather than think of ourselves as having to behave as we do because of the circumstances and positions in which we find ourselves, we should grab this chance to adopt a policy that invites us to see ourselves as producing those "social facts" the absence of which we are always complaining about.

Natasha Bukhari,
P.O. Box 364,
Amman.

Majority against bigotry

To the Editor:

After hearing and reading arguments mainly condemning Dr. Labib Kamhawi for what he said in a CNN report last week, I thought not enough light was being shed on what his partner in the programme, Dr. Fahed Fanek, had to say.

If Dr. Kamhawi's critics thought he had said anything wrong in that report, I don't think that many people, be they Jordanians or Jordanians of Palestinian origin, would have agreed with Dr. Fanek's views (or information) either. Therefore, it is more important and more useful for all of us to try to deal with an issue as sensitive as the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship in a fair and objective manner, which requires a more open and frank debate instead of monologues of criticism and slander, or even threats from any party against the other.

One thing upon which both Dr. Kamhawi and Dr. Fanek agreed in their TV debate was that the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship was always widely discussed in private, but never had its fair share of open, public debate — which, I believe, has contributed to it becoming such a sensitive subject, partially causing such unwarranted reactions as we have seen on CNN.

Throughout the history of that relationship, which is both rich and long, there were and will always be Jordanians who fought and will fight for Palestine and the Palestinians, and who consider Palestine as their own home, being part of the big Arab Nation, and they are as such "more Palestinian than the Palestinians." By the same token, there were and will always be Palestinians who are "more Jordanian than the Jordanians," by virtue of their love for this country. I like to consider myself in the majority of people who share the same reasonable ideas and principles about the relationship.

This majority believes that anybody, be he or she Jordanian or Palestinian, or of any other national or religious background, who promotes or provokes discrimination and provincialism should be rejected and dismissed from our ranks. Extreme ideas and positions are not for us, for moderation and reasonableness have been the hallmark of this country and its citizens throughout its modern history and before. It is time therefore to initiate a serious and civilised debate on the matter at hand, since I think a big part of the problem stems from the subject being swept under the carpet for a very long time. A public and frank debate on Jordanian-Palestinian relations can only enhance and serve the national unity of our country's citizens.

I would urge the Jordan Times itself to set a precedent by opening a constructive dialogue on this issue, if only to break the ice between the two sides and encourage other media outlets in Jordan to do the same.

Mohammad Attiyeh,
P.O. Box 626673,
Amman

Need for farsightedness

To the Editor:

"Who is a Jordanian anyway?" I believe Dr. Kamhawi's frustrated and bitter question deserves a simple answer rather than a lecture on gratitude.

A Jordanian is the only Arab who has scars and wounds where his Palestinian brother was beaten and who always feels the utmost pain seeing his ingenious twin-brother running amok again.

A Jordanian is the one who does not need to belittle or hurt or trample on others to know who he himself is. And last but not least, a Jordanian is someone who wishes Dr. Kamhawi wholeheartedly that before too long he too will come to know not only what he is, but also who he is.

To the antagonists in this as passionate as pointless a debate about who owes whom what I would like to recommend warmly Mahatma Gandhi's word: "An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind."

I believe it is obvious that Jordanians and Palestinians are in need of far-sighted politicians and experts, not blind ones.

Elinor Kaiser-Mohammad,
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Abu Nuseir.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Mafrag expected to retain one incumbent

(Continued from page 1)

to fare well in the elections because of his acceptance by members of all clans of the Bani Hassan tribe.

And like Mr. Dughmi, Mr. Mashagbeh has a presence in the city of Mafrag and can expect support from its residents who come from Bani Hassan, the West Bank and other clans in the area.

The third Mashagbeh candidate, Suleiman Abu Odeh, is also a strong contender in the race for similar reasons and because he is expected to share the 1,000 Christian votes in the city with Mr. Dughmi, Dr. Abu Oleim and Mr. Khawaldeh.

Former deputy Abu Oleim has the support of the majority of the Oleimat clan whose votes are estimated at 3,000. He can also win votes in the city due to the good reputation that he and his father, the sheikh of the Oleimat, have built in Mafrag.

Observers say that Dr. Abu Oleim, a former physician in the army, who won 2,839 votes in 1989, has kept their bridges open with the residents of Mafrag, offering help and providing services to this city on the highway to Irbid and Damascus.

Mr. Akhu Rshideh is challenged by another member of the Khazaleh clan of the Bani Hassan tribe but most observers say he will win the majority of their 4,000 registered voters. His challenger, Mifteh Al Khazaleh, "does not stand a chance," said a Mafrag lawyer who asked not to be named.

Having trailed the third winner of the Mafrag parliamentary seats in 1989 (Nawwaf Khawaldeh) with only six votes, Mr. Akhu Rshideh is one of the strongest candidates in Mafrag this time with the majority of his clan behind him.

Like other favourite candidates in Mafrag, Mr. Akhu Rshideh, a lawyer, has a strong base of support in the city and is expected to tap it on Nov. 8, when the 28,397 voters in Mafrag who have collected their voting cards go to the polls.

The only candidate of the 'Omoush clan whose 2,300 registered voters have given him their unanimous support. Mr. Hosban will also have a strong performance on Monday, especially that he can expect support from members of other clans.

"The division among the Khawaldeh clan has practically diminished all their chances to get any of their members elected," said a well-informed resident of Mafrag.

The Khawaldeh clan, which has 3,700 registered voters, is fielding five candidates, including the former deputy who won 2,533 votes in the 1989 elections.

With his clan divided and his support in the city and among other clans weaker than other contenders, Mr. Khawaldeh is entering the race weaker than he was in 1989.

The failure of the clan to put its weight behind one candidate has also weakened the chances of the three candidates of the Shdeifat clan, including Islamic Action Front (IAF) candidate Mousa Shdeifat.

Mr. Shdeifat is expected to get some of the votes of his clan but the IAF has a weak presence in this governorate of about 162,000 residents, said Dr. Khaled Abu Summagheh, a physician who lost his bid for election in 1989.

The IAF knows it cannot win in Mafrag but entered the race to establish a presence in the governorate, most observers agree.

The political ideology of the IAF cannot overcome the tribal strength in this rural bedouin community where politics are overshadowed by immediate concerns about jobs, social development, health and education, the observers say.

"Politics have very little influence in Mafrag," said Dr. Abu Summagheh. Here, "people speak of services, unemployment and bread," said Dr. Abu Oleim.

The absence of political issues in the campaign is also noticeable among the 3,200 registered voters of Jordanians of Palestinian origin residing in Mafrag.

Like other inhabitants of the city, they are concerned with issues that pertain to

their daily lives and needs, and the two Jordanian-Palestinian candidates who are vying for their support are not campaigning with political platforms.

"Politics will not be an issue (for the Jordanian Palestinian voters). The concerns are similar among all residents of the city," said Mahmoud Al Rayyan, a Jordanian of Palestinian origin who is a physician practising here. His views are shared by other observers and candidates in Mafrag.

While Sleiman Abu Gdheiri is not expected to do better in his bid for election than he did in 1989 when he scored 413 votes, his immediate competitor, Raslan Ayyoub, is likely to win the majority of the Palestinian votes in Mafrag.

A newcomer to Jordan and its political arena, Mr. Ayyoub, a businessman who returned from Kuwait recently, is expected to win the majority of the Palestinian vote because "the (Jordanian-Palestinians), like Jordanian tribes, want to support one of their own."

Mafrag candidates, however, do not expect the Palestinian vote to go exclusively to candidates of Palestinian origin. Both Mr. Dughmi and Dr. Abu Oleim expect support from the community and observers say Mr. Akhu Rshideh will also receive some of their votes.

Though Mr. Ayyoub is expected to do well in the electoral race, he is not likely to become a deputy in the 12th Parliament. This is because his support is limited to the city in a district where candidates who can win the elections have to appeal to the clans inhabiting the villages surrounding this city in the middle of Jordan's northern desert.

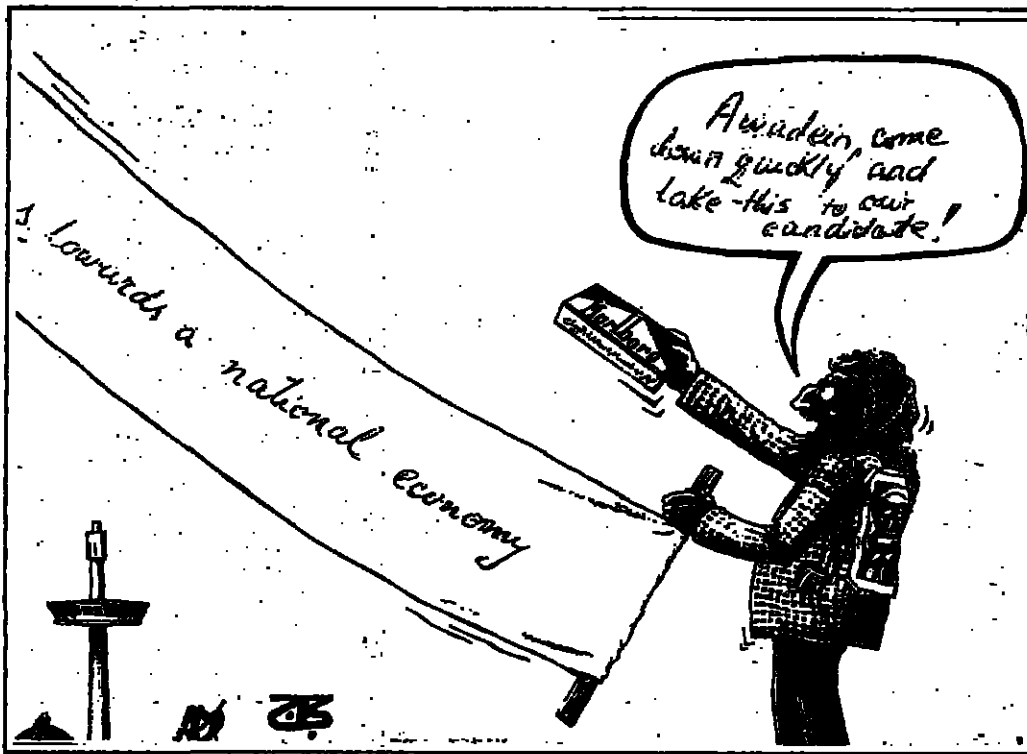
Snippets and tidbits from

Last ditch plans for and confusing manifestations of support; coin tossing for 'right' representative

The 1993 elections campaign, serious as it appears, is not devoid of a light — sometimes funny — side. These are tidbits about news, views and comments about the campaign that will appear (hopefully) every day in this corner until it is all over on Nov. 8. Humour is intended in the column, in no way libel.

THIRD DISTRICT Christian candidate Ibrahim Nuwayr Naber got his support from a symbolic Jordanian personality. Under the slogan "Yes... to constructive work and development, no... to useless banter and futile chatter," Abu Awad, a well-known television comedian who usually represents the typical East Jordanian personality, announced his endorsement of Mr. Naber. "Which is not exactly out of the ordinary because Mr. Naber is also the Al Ahd Party's candidate in the district and that party is also the 'typical Jordanian party,'" not so East Jordanian observer opined.

BADER ABDUL HAQ, a well-known columnist for Al Ra'i Arabic daily, yesterday announced his endorsement of three candidates in the Third District. Although Mr. Abdul Haq should be given credit for placing his weight constructively in the elections race, it seems that he only contributed to further confusing the voters who were



already tossing the coin for any of the three choices. Mr. Abdul Haq urged that votes be cast in favour of Taher Masri, Fakhri Kawa and Faris Nabulsi. To further add to the confusion, a candidate in that district, Mazin Nasouh Rayal, announced also yesterday that he was withdrawing from the race and urged his supporters to vote for Mr. Masri, Mr. Nabulsi and Mr. Ali Abu Ragheb. But while Mr. Abdul Haq pub-

lished the names of the candidates he wants supported, Mr. Rayal only published their photos and his name. Maybe he didn't actually mean to announce his withdrawal from the race.

DR. AWADH KHEIFAT, who is a frontrunner in the elections for the Maan District, gave up on publishing appeals to his voters this late in the election race and adopted a more pragmatic

attitude to the whole affair. "Buses shuttling voters to Maan to vote for Dr. Awadh Kheifat will leave Amman between 6:00 and 7:30 a.m." The buses will also leave from Zarqa and Mafrag. No mention was made, however, of when or how they will come back... if ever they want to face the reality of Amman or Zerka again.

THIRD DISTRICT candidate Jaafar Abdul Hadi deserves a

date, but, observers there say, not more than 10-15 per cent.

The camp, which has the voting strength — 4,000 votes — to send one of their ranks, to Parliament is unlikely to do so. The camp has two candidates, one considered the "establishment" candidate and one other liberal candidate.

The so-called establishment candidate, Riad Osman Daoud, is expected to get at

least half the votes cast in the camp. A business-oriented independent, Mr. Daoud is campaigning as a Jordanian of Palestinian origin.

The liberal candidate, Kamal Azeb, on the other hand, is stressing social and economic issues.

The other main population centre in the Jerash district are the voters of the 'Bani Hassan tribe. Spread over different regions on the Jerash-Mafrag route, the

mention for getting the right idea, if not the right supporters, for becoming a serious contender for the coveted Parliament seat. Under the headline "The reasons why I am running and my ability to contest," Mr. Abdul Hadi says: "I don't live in an ivory tower and I do not have maids, a private driver or a personal guard. I do not contract foreign companies to clean my home and office and I do not import my house furniture from Europe... I do not rent an airplane to spend a weekend abroad... and, more importantly, I am not a member of a party that would spend its money on me nor media contacts to polish my image..." Therefore, I am running for the race because I am just like you, I feel and suffer what you feel and suffer." That is true, but as one political pundit put it, "we vote for those who are better than us in the hope that we can, one day, become like them."

WHILE JORDAN Television and Radio Corporation has showed little enthusiasm for the intricacies of the Nov. 8 elections, journalists have poured in from the rest of the world as if to show just how disinterested our official media are in the whole

campaign. Among the many guest journalists in town is a BBC Arabic service team headed by the editor of current affairs in the department, Sami Haddad. The news is that Mr. Haddad, who heads a three-member team, is preparing for live-link Tuesday morning between the BBC Arabic service and Jordan Radio during which they will broadcast the results of the elections and host a number of academics and analysts who will venture to slice into the results and tell the rest of the world the radio's listeners what they indicate. Jordanians, no doubt, will thank Mr. Haddad and his team for giving Radio Jordan the opportunity to air educated analysis on its waves, and at the same time save the national station's directors from getting flak for the contents of the programme. "That was the BBC, we had nothing to do with it," is all they need to say when senior Information Ministry officials come calling.

Narmeen Murad

Jerash incumbents fight hard

(Continued from page 1)

8 will exceed 30,000. A lot of people here have picked up their voting cards but will not vote on polling day," said Naim Rawashdeh, a local political observer.

Like in some other districts in Jordan, a consensus on who will win the race for the two Muslim seats allocated to Jerash is difficult to find. Depending on what quarter of town you are in or what village for that matter, people will predict that one of the two former deputies — Issa Rimoni from the town of Rimoni or Hussein Mjalli from the town of Kita will fail in their reelection bid.

But, with the uncertainties of the one-person, one-vote system, there are no sure winners or losers. There is, however, clear dissatisfaction with the two former deputies who are both accused of not living up to their previous campaign promises.

Mr. Rimoni, the millionaire businessman who was the frontrunner in 1989 with 3,480 voters, is considered a big-time patron who employs some 600 Jerash natives in various businesses both in Jerash and Amman. In his election campaign he has been promising 400 more jobs for his constituents.

Considered to be too complacent politically, Mr. Rimoni is accused by many locals of being too apolitical to be in Parliament. "We want him to go in and do some shouting. We appreciate the job opportunities he has created, but we want the main Jerash road fixed; we want more facilities and we

feel he has not always fought hard enough for that," said one local restaurant owner who cast one of his votes for Mr. Rimoni in the 1989 elections.

Mr. Rimoni is from the town of Rimoni, which has a population of some 3,000 people; 1,000 of these are registered voters and most are expected to vote for Rimoni. His only rival in his hometown is his relative and the Islamic Action Front (IAF) candidate, Suleiman Saad Khalaf Al Rimoni.

Like in other parts of Jordan the IAF has fielded a candidate from the same clan as the most prominent tribal or patron candidate to reduce his chances of winning.

According to local observers Suleiman Rimoni is expected to win voices of discontent from several quarters; tribal, Palestinian and urban Jerash votes. But most observers do not predict a victory for the IAF candidate. The IAF itself says they do not necessarily expect a victory in Jerash but rather a defeat for the district's previous deputy — Issa Rimoni.

Mr. Mjalli, the other former deputy, who won the second Jerash seat in 1989 with 2,787 votes, is also fighting hard to retain his seat. While Mr. Mjalli was very active in the last Parliament, being the chairman of its legal committee, not all natives of Jerash believed he expressed their particular concerns.

Some quarters accuse the former president of the Bar Association of not being resolute enough in pursuing corruption investigations of former officials. However,

Mr. Mjalli did not give a vote of confidence to a single government during the four years he was in Parliament, a fact that appeals to many of the more opinionated among his constituents.

Four major voting towns, Burma, Suf, Sakeb and Kufre Khal, have their own clan candidates.

Three candidates, Hikmat Zreigat, Suhail Kayed, Ahmad 'Utoum and Saleh Hawadeh, are all natives of Suf running to win a maximum of some 2,000 votes expected to be cast in their town.

Mustapha Birmawi, a popular former Ministry of Health official, is the only candidate running from the town of Burma, where he is expected to win a maximum of 1,000 votes from constituents there. A Pan-Arabist, he is expected to win most of his votes from urban residents in Jerash for his efforts on behalf of public health services.

Fayez Asayria, a clan candidate from Sakeb, is also expected to get a maximum of 1,000 votes from his townspeople and only a few from elsewhere.

The town of Kufre Khal, which is expected to cast some 1,000-1,500 votes, is expected to vote in favour of Mr. Mjalli and Suhail Al Kayed, one of the Suf-based candidates.

If these voting predictions materialise, then Mr. Mjalli is sure to win one of the two Jerash parliamentary seats.

The IAF candidate, Suleiman Rimoni, will have to get his votes from Rimoni and the urban based voters of Jerash. The Suf camp will also give a few votes to the IAF candi-

date, but, observers there say, not more than 10-15 per cent.

The camp, which has the voting strength — 4,000 votes — to send one of their ranks, to Parliament is unlikely to do so. The camp has two candidates, one considered the "establishment" candidate and one other liberal candidate.

The so-called establishment candidate, Riad Osman Daoud, is expected to get at

least half the votes cast in the camp. A business-oriented independent, Mr. Daoud is campaigning as a Jordanian of Palestinian origin.

The liberal candidate, Kamal Azeb, on the other hand, is stressing social and economic issues.

The other main population centre in the Jerash district are the voters of the 'Bani Hassan tribe. Spread over different regions on the Jerash-Mafrag route, the

Bani Hassan have two candidates and an expected 4,000 votes.

Mifteh Irheini is Bani Hassan's main candidate. Fellow tribesmen and candidate Nasser Harasheh, who unlike Mr. Irheini, is said to be running without tribal leaders' consent. If tribal will prevails over 75 per cent of the Bani Hassan voters, Mr. Irheini have an excellent chance of winning a seat.

With less than 48 hours

before the votes are cast the people of Jerash were expecting any two of the following candidates to win seats in the Lower House of Parliament. Hussein Mjalli, Issa Rimoni, Mustapha Birmawi, Mifteh Irheini, Suhail Kayed, Suleiman Saad Al Rimoni and Hikmat Zreigat.

But it will be the urbanites of Jerash with some 12,000 votes who will give the necessary votes to the winners and decide the election results.

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African leaders sign common market pact

KAMPALA (AFP) — Leaders of 15 eastern and southern African countries have signed a treaty here to establish a common market by the year 2000 after hours of bargaining.

But Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe refused to sign, saying the relationship between the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Southern African Development and Coordinating Conference (SADC) had not been clarified.

His objection disrupted the summit Friday of the 18-member preferential trade area (PTA), a regional free trade organisation now disbanded and reformed as COMESA.

But the other leaders decided to go ahead anyway and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni said experts were studying the relationship between the two organisations.

South Africa, which has been asked to join COMESA after multiracial elections planned next year, sent observers

to the summit, attended by 10 heads of state and senior officials from another six nations.

COMESA Secretary-General Bingu Mutharika told the summit that the decision to establish a common market would help member countries "achieve balanced growth and development."

The treaty listed COMESA's aims as helping national economies overcome structural economic weaknesses such as a slow rate of capital accumulation, insufficient industrial development and underdevelopment in agriculture, transport and communications.

Mr. Mutharika said COMESA would try new strategies to boost regional trade and solve economic problems.

He said 11 years' experience with the PTA had shown that countries in the region could not produce adequate goods that could be traded in the international market at competitive prices.

COMESA, he added, will encourage private enterprise to

operate in a competitive environment to produce high quality goods.

He urged member countries to abandon reliance on exports of primary agricultural products and instead to transform them into finished goods.

This is the only way to minimise external economic destabilisation resulting from the decline and fluctuations in prices of primary commodity exports to industrialised countries," Mr. Mutharika said.

COMESA brings together a population of 270 million people, nearly half of Africa's population, with a gross national product of about \$250 billion a year.

Eritrea, Seychelles and Madagascar, which were not PTA members, have joined COMESA. The other members are Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

British cabinet spends £15m a year on booze

LONDON (R) — Newspapers dubbed the British government a "drinks cabinet" Saturday after an opposition politician said ministers had spent a record £15.6 million (\$23 million) on entertainment last year.

Labour member of parliament Tony Banks compiled figures which showed the cabinet entertainment budget last year was some £4 million (\$6 million) higher than the previous record of £11.5 million (\$17 million) two years ago.

"While the government is busy cutting people's benefits and slashing other areas of government spending, they are now revealed as a bunch of total hypocrites," Mr. Banks said, seizing on Prime Minister John Major's spending cuts.

"Everybody else is being made worse off while they are increasing their own entertaining allowance," Mr. Banks said. The Sun's front-page headline was "Major's £15 million drinks cabinet — scandal of soaring booze bill" while the Daily Mirror's was "Major's drinks cabinet blows £15 million a year on booze."

Conservative Party sources said the entertainment bill had been affected by Britain's six-month presidency of the European Community last year.

German unemployment climbs to 2.45 million

BONN (R) — German unemployment rose sharply to record levels in October, the Federal Labour Office said Friday, and economists said many more jobs would be lost before the economy recovered.

The Labour Office said west German seasonally adjusted joblessness rose by nearly 60,000 to 2.45 million — the highest October figure in the federal republic's history and the highest for any month since German unification in 1990.

The unemployment rate, based on unadjusted figures, rose to 7.6 per cent from 7.4 per cent in September.

East German unadjusted unemployment rose by a more modest 6,000 to 1.17 million, a jobless rate of 15.3 per cent.

Economists had expected a rise of around 35,000 in west German unemployment.

"It was a lot bigger than we had expected," said Werner Verboeket of Commerzbank in Frankfurt.

Another economist said the rise in west Germany was probably due to many lay-offs taking effect at the end of the third quarter.

"It's a quarterly effect. Many of those given notice during the third quarter did not show up in the figures until now," he said.

The Nuremberg-based Labour Office also reported that the number of short-time workers in west Germany rose to 660,000 in October from 590,000 in September.

Economists said they expected the ranks of the unemployed to swell by a total of about half a million this year.

An expected slight recovery in economic growth should slow the rate of increase next year, with about 200,000 people losing their jobs, but few economists see unemployment starting to fall until 1995.

Unemployment is a so-called lagging indicator, which continues rising for some time after recession has ended.

Economics Minister Guenter Rexrodt has said total German unemployment will continue to rise to more than four million at the beginning of next year.

Delors bids to create 20m new EC jobs by year 2000

BRUSSELS (R) — EC Commission President Jacques Delors, seeking a "new deal" that will cut the Community's jobless queues in half, has drawn up a plan to create 20 million jobs by the end of this century.

With EC leaders increasingly worried about the havoc unemployment could wreak and whether the Community can compete with the United States and Japan, the blueprint is an attempt to tackle the problem without destroying the social network.

A summary of Mr. Delors' draft plan was obtained by Reuters Friday. It recommends a massive increase in spending on transport, energy and telecommunications and greater efforts in new areas of growth such as biotechnology.

The report suggests cuts in working hours, job-sharing schemes, greater wage flexibility, more training and an energy and pollution tax to compensate for reduced social spending.

"Europe needs a new solidarity between those with work and those without," the draft summary said. Mr. Delors will formally present his completed plan to change the 12-nation Community's flagging economic fortunes at a summit in December.

The European Commission

wanted to create enough jobs to cut the unemployment rate to five per cent of the workforce by the year 2000, meaning that 20 million new jobs would have to be found, the draft says.

"This will require a combination of a stable macro-economic framework enabling sustainable high rates of growth and a substantial reform of the labour market... and... a wider sharing of jobs and incomes," it says.

EC governments are increasingly worried that unemployment — currently at a record 10.4 per cent of the workforce — is draining cash and tearing holes in the fabric of society by contributing to increased crime and popular discontent.

The Community jobless figure is expected to rise to 12 per cent next year, or 20 million people.

To create the extra jobs, the Delors draft says the Community's economy will need an annual growth rate of three per cent from 1995 and that investment levels would have to return to the record level of the 1960s.

Next year, however, the Community's economy is forecast to grow by just over one per cent.

Mr. Delors has proposed spending more than \$50 billion (European Currency Unit, \$565 billion) until the end of the century on transport, energy and telecommunications network projects. The funding would come mainly from the private sector, although some cash would also have to come from state coffers.

The draft also says the barrier-free internal market for the EC's 345 million citizens had to be made more effective.

Mr. Delors, a French Socialist, has complained in the past that member states did not seem willing to put up the cash required to solve the Community's economic problems.

His proposals are likely to get a mixed reception from member states. While governments recognise they must act soon to tackle the problems, they are not inclined to increase spending much when times are tough.

Britain in particular has argued that only increased competitiveness — not more public spending — will enable the EC to keep pace with Japan and the United States.

But Mr. Delors' plan rejects any suggestion that the European model of extensive social and welfare support for its citizens should be ditched.

Russian privatisation vouchers hit record high

MOSCOW (R) — Privatisation vouchers, the seeds for a Russian securities market, hit a record high on the Moscow and St. Petersburg exchanges Friday in what dealers said was a sign of market confidence in President Boris Yeltsin.

The price of the voucher, distributed to the people last year to be used in Russia's privatisation programme, doubled to 24,000 roubles (\$20.4) from 12,000 (\$10.2) last week.

Dealers said the immediate factor behind the jump was a share offer in the northern Russian oil giant Yuganskneftegaz which is auctioning 12 per cent of its shares to the public.

"Lots of big buyers have appeared on the market, mostly intermediaries buying for other enterprises," said Stanislav Granikh, chief analyst at Russian Investment Fund LLD.

Yuganskneftegaz is the first major sale in a series of oil-related privatisations. Dealers said at least 1,000 firms were to be privatised at auctions.

They noted that commercial banks were picking up

vouchers to speculate on the market and foreign investors were also showing an interest in the auctions.

The voucher, with a face value of 10,000 roubles (\$8.5), was trading at only 7,000 roubles (\$6) four months ago. But market confidence was boosted in October when Mr. Yeltsin crushed his headline opponents in parliament.

The dissolved Soviet-era parliament had tried to block privatisations which were a major plank of government reforms aimed at transforming Russia's post-communist economy.

"After the parliament was dissolved, the main bearish factor on the market just disappeared," said Igor Ilyinikh, a senior official at Moscow's Central Universal Exchange.

The market has also been encouraged by a steady rouble exchange rate against the dollar. Due to tight central bank policies the dollar gained only two per cent against the rouble in October, against monthly inflation of over 20 per cent.

And with a 30 per cent rise last month, the increase in

voucher prices exceeded inflation for the first time ever.

Bankers said the enthusiasm for vouchers was a taste of things to come in Russia's emerging securities markets.

Despite tiny volumes, banks and corporates have started trading treasury bills and gold-backed certificates which were introduced by the government earlier this year.

Vouchers were given free to 140 million Russians in 1992 to be used to buy shares in some 10,000 medium-to-large firms slated for sale, about half of Russia's industrial capital.

"There are many firms to be privatised soon. The government is expected to announce details of more sell-offs on Nov. 18 and that's one of the reasons for high demand," said Mr. Granikh.

Demand has been rising slowly but surely since August when the government auctioned several smaller oil firms and factories in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Mr. Yeltsin ordered all state firms to auction a minimum 29 per cent stake to the public.

UAE to expand communications sector

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has approved more than \$400 million to expand its communications sector to meet a surge in demand, Al Itihad said Saturday.

A project to build a marine cable link with Iran, Kuwait and Bahrain will be completed by 1995 and there are plans to boost the telephone and telegraphic network. Ali Al Oweis of the telecommunication company Etisalat told the paper.

Around 240 million dirhams (\$65.3 million) have been allocated for four new telephone networks and 1.3 billion dirhams (\$354 million) for other development projects over the next two years, Sheikh Oweis said.

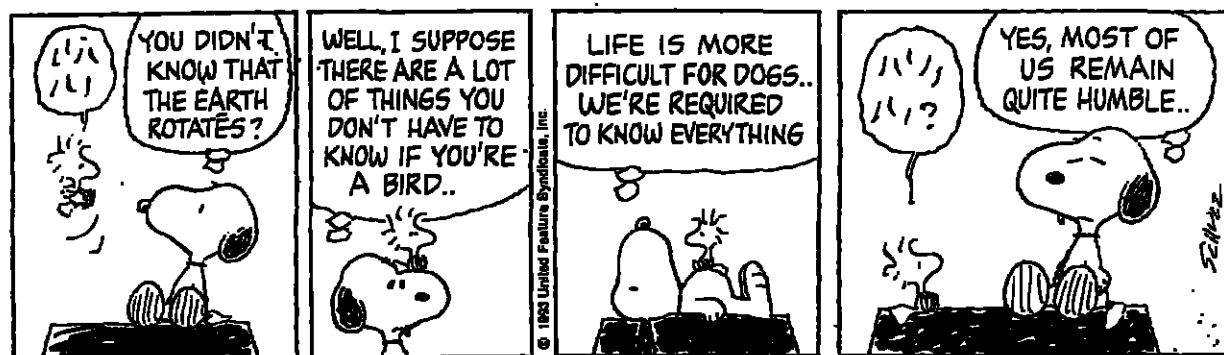
"1994 will also see the introduction of the advanced international mobile telephone system GSM with a capacity of 60,000 lines while 135,000 pagers will be added," said Sheikh Oweis, whose company

runs more than 500,000 telephone and telegraphic lines in the UAE.

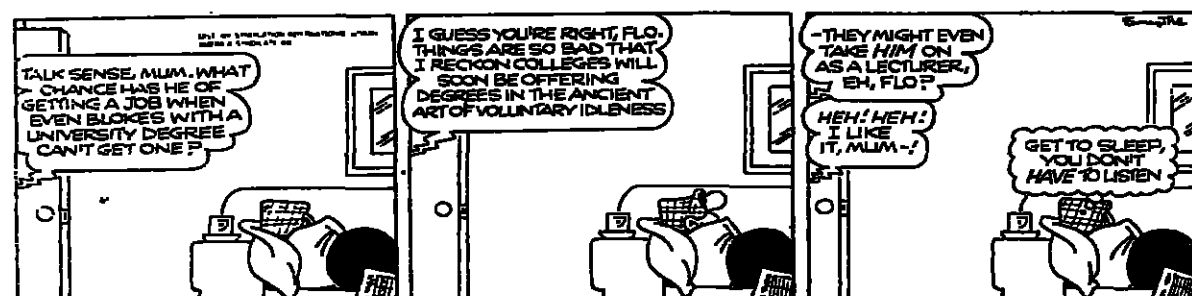
Etisalat officials said the expansions were prompted by a sharp increase in demand due to a business upswing in the region.

Owned 60 per cent by the government, Etisalat had monopolised communications services in the emirates until it allowed the private sector to join in last year.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



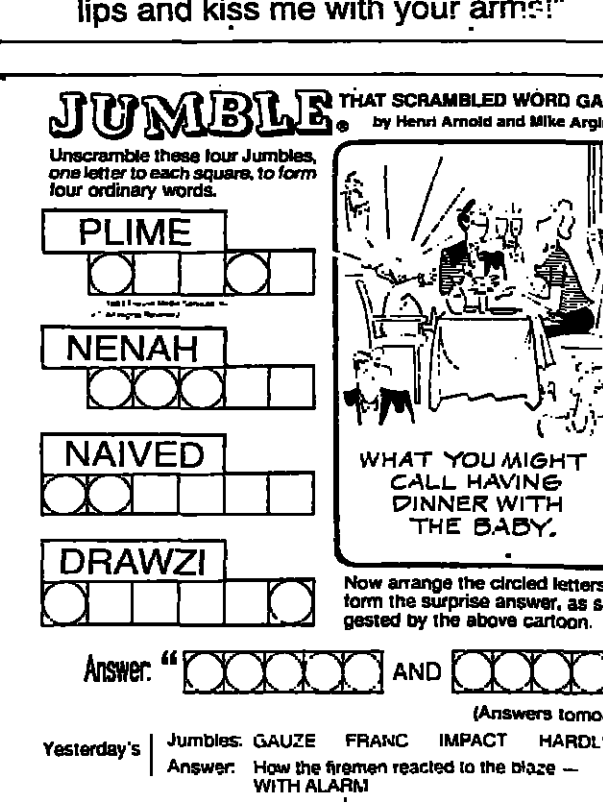
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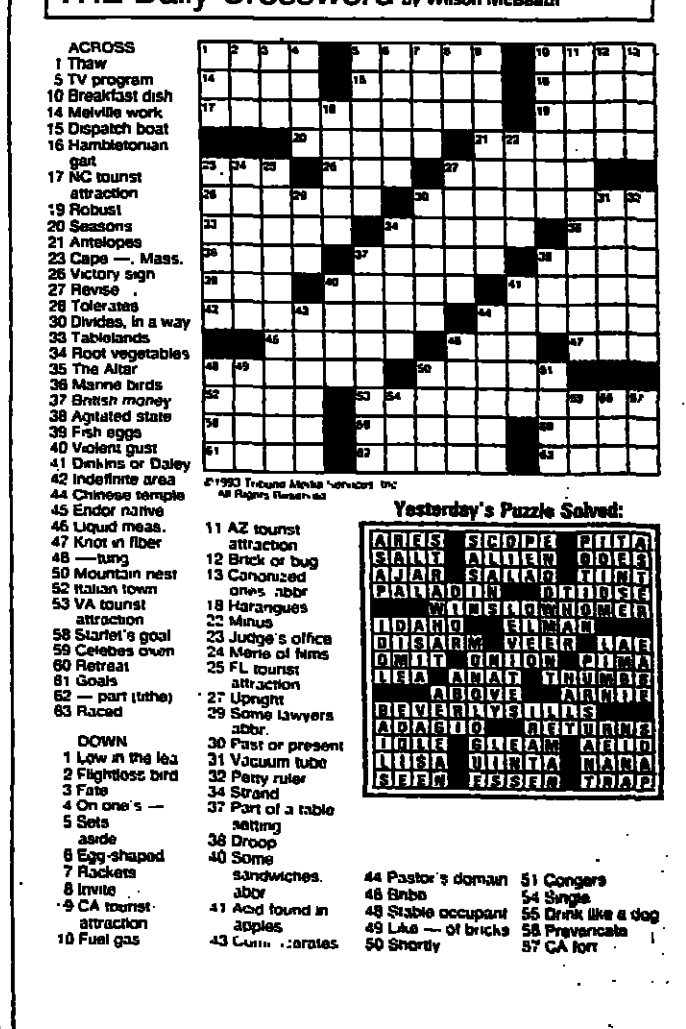
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Yeltsin opposes early presidential elections, offers to retire in 1996

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin said Saturday he was against holding an early presidential poll in June but offered to retire from politics altogether once his tenure was completed in 1996, news agencies reported.

Mr. Yeltsin, speaking at a meeting of news editors, announced he did not plan to seek a second term as president after his mandate expires in June of 1996, stating that he had suffered "too many blows".

The Russian leader said that he was against holding a presidential election in June, backtracking on an earlier promise to hold a vote six months after parliamentary elections to the new parliament.

"We all know that I have suffered many blows at the hands of destiny. It is too much for one person to endure," the Russian leader was quoted by Interfax as saying.

Mr. Yeltsin said he considered it "his task" to "find and prepare" new candidates to the presidency and that he would work towards rallying popular support for his chosen successor.

His remarks appeared as a concession to opponents who could be convinced to drop the early presidential vote in exchange for Mr. Yeltsin's retirement from politics.

Mr. Yeltsin stated earlier this month that he would allow the new parliament, which is to be elected on Dec. 12 to decide if the presidential election were to go ahead but he stop-

ped short of giving his own opinion on the issue.

"I am against new elections to the presidency in June 1994," Mr. Yeltsin clearly stated during the meeting, adding: "I am in favour of allowing the president to fully serve out his term up until 1996."

He predicted that victory will not be easy for candidates to the presidency, adding that "those who now say they want to become president are mistaken if they think that this will be easy to achieve."

Mr. Yeltsin announced a presidential election for June 12 in the days following his decision to dissolve the old-guard parliament as a concession to regional leaders who charged he was seeking to set up a dictatorship.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar, who leads the Russia's Choice coalition in the parliamentary elections, said in a newspaper interview published Saturday that he was "cautious" in predicting the outcome of the vote.

"I am not euphoric. I am awaiting the new parliament with great caution," Mr. Gaidar stated in an interview to the Russian newspaper Moskovsky Komsomolets.

Mr. Gaidar stated that the voters would choose between three main platforms in the Dec. 12 election: Communist, conservative and reformist.

Experts have predicted that candidates running under the Russia's Choice banner, which calls itself the "presidential

party" will win at least one-third of the seats in the lower house of parliament, or Duma.

It remains unclear however what percentage of the vote Communists and nationalists, who generally enjoy support in the provinces, will gather.

"These elections are crucial for Russia," Mr. Gaidar commented, stating that the country was forced to abandon two parliaments — the Soviet legislature in 1991 and the old-guard parliament in 1993 — and that it would be "unforgivable" to lose a third legislature.

The 450 members of the new state Duma will be tasked with approving President Boris Yeltsin's choice of a prime minister who will head the government in its third year of economic reforms.

A leading Russian Communist politician said Friday that a group of armed masked men entered his party headquarters and stole petitions bearing 20,000 signatures needed for participation in the upcoming elections, Interfax said.

Sergei Baburin, president of the Russian People's Union, claimed three of the men were wearing uniforms of Interior Ministry crack security troops while three others were in civilian clothes and one was carrying a Kalashnikov automatic rifle.

Mr. Baburin, a hardline deputy in the former Russian parliament who was briefly arrested after the parliamentary revolt was crushed last month, claimed the assailants

spent 40 minutes in the building and blocked all inside from leaving, the report said.

Those in the building included Viktor Alksnis and Yevgeny Kogan, two known political hardliners who were deputies in the legislature of the former Soviet Union.

In a separate statement, the union said its members were working on preparing the petitions to be handed over to the Central Elections Commission and stated the incident was "an excellent example of free elections in Yeltsin's Russia."

Mr. Baburin said one of the assailants flashed a police identification card and said the group was carrying out a "planned action," according to Interfax.

The report said Moscow police and Interior Ministry officials questioned about Mr. Baburin's claim said they knew nothing about it.

Under election regulations, political parties are required to amass 100,000 petition signatures from seven regions of Russia by midnight Saturday to take part in the Dec. 12 legislative elections.

Mr. Baburin said the group fled the premises and took the lists with 20,000 signatures with them.

In a separate development, Communists were allowed to lay red carnations at the Lenin Mausoleum Saturday to mark the 76th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution as city officials in Moscow and St. Petersburg maintained their ban on all rallies scheduled for Sunday.

Police hunt arsonists in California fires

MALIBU, Calif. (R) — Authorities Saturday pressed the hunt for arsonists who set the recent southern California wildfires, including one that killed three people and reduced parts of this celebrity enclave to charred rubble.

The Malibu blaze, which destroyed about 350 homes, many of them million-dollar mansions, was the worst of 19 suspicious wildfires that may have been set deliberately in the last 10 days, according to news reports.

The Los Angeles Times Saturday quoted a federal official as saying that of the 26 fires that ravaged southern California since Oct. 26, 19 were believed to have been the work of arsonists.

"This has to be one of the biggest tragedies ever attributed to arson," Larry Cornelison of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, was quoted as saying.

"It took such a toll in damage and human misery. And to know that individuals were responsible for this makes it even worse," added Mr. Cornelison, supervisor of the bureau's Arson Task Force.

The fires that cut a swath of destruction across California destroyed about 1,000 homes at a cost of \$1 billion. In addition to the Malibu tragedy, 315 homes burned down in Laguna Beach last week in another arson-suspected fire.

In the posh Los Angeles suburb of Alhambra, where the first of the major wildfires occurred, destroying 115 homes, a homeless man faces a misdemeanor charge of unlawfully starting a fire.

The man admitted setting the blaze accidentally after building a campfire to keep himself warm in the predawn chill 11 days ago.

But the arsonists who deliberately set the other fires were still at large.

Forensic psychiatrist Alfred Coodley, who specialized in the criminal mind, said in an interview he believed the arson fires were the work of pyromaniacs who were driven to compulsively set them to satisfy an inner fascination with flames.

Coodley, a professor of psychiatry at the University of California at Los Angeles, said pyromaniacs rarely felt remorse over their actions, even when they resulted in death and massive destruction.

Authorities launched a murder investigation into the Malibu blaze Friday, even resorting to hypnosis, to try to find the arsonist.

As firefighters extinguished California's last major blaze, homicide detectives joined with arson experts in an effort to track down the person Governor Pete Wilson has branded "worse than a child molester" and who could face the death penalty.

New Delhi elects 1st legislative assembly

NEW DELHI (Agencies) — The residents of New Delhi voted Saturday in an election that will partially replace the federal rule they have lived under since 1956 with a legislative assembly.

Hours before the polls opened, politicians reportedly toured the city's ghettos to hand many of their illiterate residents gifts of liquor and cash in an effort to win their votes.

Party activists walked through the slums Friday night, pulling small bottles of liquor from beneath their arm pits and rupees notes out of their pockets, the Pioneer newspaper said Saturday.

A heavy turnout was reported as voters chose representatives to the 70-member legislative assembly that will help govern the capital. Unlike state legislatures, New Delhi's new assembly will have no power over law-and-order or public utilities.

Between now and end of the month, local elections also will be held in four of India's 25 states, and no results will be announced in any of them until the last election is finished.

The polls will have no direct influence on Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's minority government, whose term expires in 1996.

But they will be the first indication in a year whether an

opposition party promoting Hindu nationalism and fundamentalism is still gaining ground against Mr. Rao's secular Congress Party.

On Dec. 6, Hindu radicals destroyed an ancient mosque in the town of Ayodhya, where they believe Muslim invaders once tore down a temple honouring their god Rama. That set off months of Hindu-Muslim riots around northern India that killed 2,000 people.

Mr. Rao blamed the Bharatiya Janata Party, which has become the largest opposition force in parliament by promoting Hinduism. The prime minister also dismissed the four state governments that were being ruled by the party, and placed them under federal rule.

Elections to restore those governments will be held this month in Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, four states that include nearly 145 million people.

Meanwhile, Indian negotiators told Muslim Kashmiri separatists under army siege in a mosque near Srinagar that the past three weeks that they had no choice but to surrender.

Kashmir Police Chief Manohar Nath Sabharwal told reporters the new government negotiator Mehmood Ur Rehman met with representatives of the armed militants inside the encircled Hazratbal Mosque.

Haiti talks scuttled after army fails to appear

PORT-AU-PRINCE (AP) — Talks on restoring ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power collapsed when military representatives failed to attend.

The no-show Friday hobbled any chance for a quick end to Haiti's crisis, which results from the military's failure to step down as scheduled under a U.N.-brokered peace plan. It could lead to expanded sanctions on Haiti, already suffering under a U.N. imposed oil embargo.

United Nations envoy Dante Caputo, who was to preside over the talks, will leave Saturday for consultations in New York and Washington, said his spokesman, Eric Falt. Mr. Caputo blamed the army for the failure of the talks and for Haiti's suffering.

"We have made a long-term commitment and there is in no way the slightest chance of our renouncing our goals," Mr. Caputo said. "If there are fanatical children it is not because of sanctions" but because of a lack of democracy.

In Washington, State Department spokesman David Johnson said the Clinton administration "regretted" the failure of the army commander, Lt.-Gen. Raoul Cedras, to attend the talks. He said the administration was considering

additional steps it might take with other nations.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher denied accusations that the United States has backed down on its commitment to restore democracy in Haiti, and said the administration's policy has been consistent.

"We were never inclined to shoot our way in there," he said in an interview on CNN, noting that the U.S. troops that were to have been part of a U.N. mission to Haiti were not combat troops.

Mr. Aristide, who is in exile in the United States since his September 1991 overthrow, has asked the United Nations for a total commercial blockade.

"We are heavy-hearted," said Herve Denis, information minister in a weak Aristide-backed transition government. "Those people (the army) are mad. Now it is up to the United Nations."

But without military participation, the prospects of bringing back Mr. Aristide and lifting the oil embargo are bleak. The United Nations has said the embargo will continue until Mr. Aristide is restored.

Shortly before the scheduled 10 a.m. start of the talks, Mr. Caputo received a letter from Gen. Cedras. Its contents were not revealed.

N. Zealand gets hung parliament after poll

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand voters handed their politicians a hung parliament Saturday in a shock for conservative Prime Minister Jim Bolger, who had been forecast to win a second three-year term.

The 2.3 million voters defied public opinion polls that had consistently predicted victory for Mr. Bolger and his austere economic policies, slashing his National Party's 34-seat majority to a mere three-seat advantage over the Labour Party.

Final results from the country's 99 constituencies showed the National Party won 49 seats, Labour Party took 46, and the Leftist Alliance Coalition and 12 newly formed New Zealand First Party won two seats apiece.

Mr. Bolger pointed out that special votes cast before election day or by expatriate New Zealanders could still change the makeup of parliament. The results of those votes, which totalled 230,000 in 1990, will not be known for about 10 days.

The 58-year-old prime minister announced he would form a second government and pledged to work with other parties.

But Mr. Bolger's monetarist economic policies, which have pulled New Zealand out of recession but whose social costs have caused deep concern, would be paralysed by his lack of a majority.

Radio New Zealand predicted the country's first hung parliament since 1928 would not last long and fresh elections could be called within a year.

Mr. Bolger, speaking to party supporters in his rural constituency of Te Kuiti, denied the election had plunged New Zealand into a constitutional crisis.

Labour Party leader Mike Moore was delighted with the results, claiming victory in his home city of Christchurch.

"We have won because we have the largest percentage of the vote. There is no moral authority for Mr. Bolger to govern," Mr. Moore told supporters.

Women's groups were also encouraged by the result, which raised the number of women members of parliament from 16 to 21, or more than 20 per cent of the total number.

National Party supporters were stunned by Saturday's vote, which flew in the face of all the polls. National lost 19 seats, including that of Labour Minister Maurice McTigue.

Mr. Bolger was certain his campaign theme "don't mess with success," focused on his record of achieving economic recovery, had won over the electorate.



A mother and child share a piece of bread and an apple, sheltering from heavy rain with some 700 other Croat refugees from Vares in Serb-occupied Sokolac, in central Bosnia (AFP photo)

Bosnian army disbands Croat unit in Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — The Muslim-led Bosnian army disbanded an independent Croat unit in Sarajevo Saturday and sealed off streets in the capital, preventing a planned evacuation of civilians from the besieged city.

The Bosnian Croat Defence Council (HVO) unit has helped defend the city against besieging Serbs. But Bosnian government radio said the unit was being dissolved because Croat forces were fighting the mostly Muslim army elsewhere in Bosnia.

Government security forces sealed off roads in the western and central part of the city Saturday morning, a Reuters correspondent reported.

The roadblocks prevented a planned evacuation of 1,471 civilian after months of talks between Serb and Muslim officials.

The Serb, Croat and Muslim civilians were to be taken by bus from Sarajevo to Serbia and Croatia Saturday. But army moves against the HVO unit left the civilians, mainly women, children and the elderly, stranded in the rain in Sarajevo.

"I don't see that it will happen in the near future," said Colonel Bill Aikman, a spokesman for the United Nations Protection Force in Sarajevo.

It was not immediately clear whether Sarajevo's small, but well-armed HVO "army" would try to resist the government decree.

Sarajevo's HVO units of about 1,500 men have served in the city's joint defence with mostly Muslim troops of the government First Corps throughout Bosnia's 19-month-old war.

But tensions with the Bos-

nian army erupted last spring and summer when it tried unsuccessfully to subordinate the HVO under its supreme command. U.N. peacekeeping soldiers moved in at one point to prevent an outbreak of fighting.

"The decision has been made to disband the HVO headquarters and to create a new Bosnian army First Corps brigade from it. Restrictions on movement have been imposed in part of the city," Sarajevo Radio said in its morning newscast.

It urged all HVO soldiers to enlist in the new brigade.

Croats started Bosnia's war as allies with the Muslims against Serbs. But Croats and Muslims fell out early this year over territorial spoils ahead of a possible peace settlement and battles have raged in central Bosnia for months.

Open Muslim-Croat war did not spread to Sarajevo and the HVO force in the capital has denied accusations of undermining its defences and preparing to attack Muslims.

Swedish and French peacekeepers helped Bosnian military police try to prevent looting in the central Bosnia town of Vares, captured by Muslim forces Thursday.

Swedish U.N. officers tried Saturday to mediate the surrender of 200-300 desperate and terrified Croat troops cut off southeast of here two days after Muslim-led forces took Vares.

The bedraggled Croats were holed up in the abandoned Croat hillside village of Dastanko, three kilometres away, after refusing to follow their retreating comrades farther south to Serb-held territory.

Georgian troops enter last rebel stronghold

MOSCOW (AFP) — Georgian government forces Saturday entered Zugdidi, the rebel Georgian stronghold of rebel leader Zviad Gamsakhurdia who has fled, the Georgian presidency told AFP.

"At 1400 (1100 GMT), advance government forces entered the town without encountering any large-scale resistance. Forces loyal to Gamsakhurdia were withdrawing in disorder towards the Inguri River," spokesman Nodar Brodzadze said.

He said Gamsakhurdia had spent the past four days in the region near Gali in Abkhazia, the northwest region of Georgia lost by government troops in September to Abkhaz rebels.

There were no casualties among government forces, according to initial reports, the spokesman said.

Russian marines had been preparing Friday to land near Zugdidi.

Quoting the press service of Russian troops in the Caucasus, ITAR-TASS said a flotilla of the Black Sea Fleet left its base at Sevastopol Friday en route for the small port of Anaklia, 10 kilometres from Zugdidi.

The first contingent of 500 Russian marines took control of key road and rail facilities in the strategic Black Sea port of Poti Friday, as Georgian forces closed in on Zugdidi.

On Saturday, another 750 marines and infantrymen landed in Poti, backed by about 40 armoured vehicles, Interfax News Agency said, quoting the Black Sea Fleet chief-of-staff.

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Tokyo, Seoul agree to strengthen ties

KYONGJU, South Korea (AFP) — Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa and South Korean President Kim Young-Sam agreed to put the past behind and build stronger ties in the first tete-a-tete meeting here Saturday between politicians of the new generation.

Meanwhile, a group of 100 protesters, led by 10 elderly women who had been forced into wartime sexual slavery for Japanese troops, marched several kilometres through the streets toward a hotel, the venue of the summit.

During the two-hour talks, Mr. Hosokawa's wife, Kayoko, visited an asylum for the aged, where some 100 Japanese widows who had married Koreans were accommodated.

Mr. Hosokawa and Mr. Kim would agree to overcome decades of bickering over the legacy of Japan's colonial rule of Korea and prepare the ground for stronger bilateral ties between the two neighbouring countries, Mr. Kim's aide said.

Recurrent controversy over the legacy of the Japanese colonial rule from 1910 to 1945, especially the use of some

200,000 Korean women as sex slaves or "comfort women" for Japanese troops, has haunted bilateral ties of the two geographically close countries.

South Korean officials said Mr. Kim would not raise the issue but wait for Mr. Hosokawa to broach it. Mr. Hosokawa was expected to apologise over the excesses in more explicit terms than his predecessors did in the past.

Braving drizzling rain and chanting protests, the marchers followed the 10 former so-called "comfort women," who wore white to mourn their dead colleagues and wept throughout the march.

Earlier Saturday, police rounded up some 30 elderly Koreans who rallied outside the hotel, protesting against Mr. Hosokawa's visit and demanding compensations for all Koreans victimised during the war.

The new governments of Japan and South Korea are both seeking to patch up the issue, with the Japanese side admitting to responsibility for forcing the Korean women into sexual slavery and the Korean side deciding not to seek material compensation.

However, analysts here said

IRA offers truce to Protestant militants

DUBLIN (R) — The Irish Republican Army (IRA) has offered Protestant death squads a truce to end sectarian violence in which 24 people have died in two weeks of the worst bloodshed in Northern Ireland for 17 years.

But it promised no end to a 20-year guerrilla war to drive Britain from the province. The British and Irish governments sought a cessation of the violence to allow them to launch a new peace initiative.

The offer was aimed at Protestant extremist gangs such as the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) which claimed responsibility for the killing a week ago of seven Halloween revellers in a pub at Greysteel, near the province's second city, Londonderry.

"Any cessation of murder attacks against nationalists would, of course, be welcome. As a consequence, we would monitor the situation and review our position towards those directly involved in the murder gangs," the IRA statement said.

"The British government and its forces bear ultimate responsibility for this conflict and armed struggle is aimed primarily at them," said an IRA statement issued in Dublin late on Friday night.

Political analysts in the province said the IRA offer to stop hunting down Protestant gunmen was aimed at reassuring Catholics terrified by the recent wave of killings in which ordinary Catholics have been gunned down at home and at work.

The UFF says it is only fighting back against nationalists who support the IRA's campaign to end British rule. It aligns itself with so-called loyalist Protestant political parties which want the province to stay British.

The Greysteel atrocity was the Protestant militants' bungled bombing of a Protestant meeting place in Belfast one week earlier which killed nine Protestants in a fish shop and triggered a new round of sectarian bloodshed.

There was no immediate response from the UFF, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) or other outlawed Protestant gangs which have killed more than 44 people this year to the IRA's 30.

Sources close to the UFF and UVF said they would want to see the ceasefire taking hold before calling off their campaign.

Last Sunday an IRA sniper fatally wounded a policeman on patrol in the village of newry, 60 kilometres south of Belfast, the last known IRA attack since the Belfast bomb.

The IRA says it does not carry out sectarian killings but sees policemen and members of the 18,000-strong British military as legitimate targets in a war to end colonial rule.

The tit-for-tat killings have given momentum to a new drive by Britain and Ireland to find a political solution.

Meanwhile, a 26-year-old Londonderry man was charged Friday with the murders of the seven people in Greysteel on Halloween eve.

Brian McNeill was also charged with membership in a proscribed organisation — the outlawed Ulster Defence Association.

Holly Hunter wins Best Actress Award

SYDNEY (R) — U.S. star Holly Hunter won the best actress prize in Australia's premier film awards, with her Australian-French film *The Piano* sweeping 11 awards in all. Hunter, playing a 19th century immigrant to New Zealand who is entangled in a complex emotional and sexual web trying to retrieve her beloved piano, joined fellow American cast member Harvey Keitel, winner in the best actor category in the Australian Film Institute (AFI) Awards. The film, this year's joint winner of the Golden Palm Award at Cannes, also took out best film, best original screenplay, best cinematography, and best director for the New Zealand-born Jane Campion. It had received 13 nominations. Campion's film in May became the first directed by a woman to win the prestigious French award. "I would like to thank Jane Campion for providing me with an opportunity that changed my personal and my professional life," Hunter said in pre-recorded comments received via satellite. "I think it's probably the most valuable experience I've ever had." The British film, *The Crying Game*, about an Irish Republican Army operative who falls for a transvestite lover of one of his victims without knowing he is a man, won best foreign film. "This industry is crucial to our cultural development," Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating told the annual AFI Awards ceremony as he handed The Piano producer Jan Chapman the best film prize. Judy Davis, of *My Brilliant Career* and *Husbands and Wives* fame, won best supporting actress for her role in the Australian film *On My Own*. Aborigine David Ngombujara won best supporting actor for *Blackfellas*, an aboriginal production with a largely aboriginal cast.

Male writer's book wins Femina Book Prize

PARIS (R) — The cream of France's feminist literati awarded their annual Femina Book Prize to male writer Marc Lambron — but he may not be altogether pleased. Literary commentators said he stood to lose a lot of money by being a pawn in the 90-year battle for supremacy between France's two oldest prizes, the Femina and the Goncourt. Lambron had been widely tipped by critics to take home next Monday's Goncourt, the oldest and most prestigious of France's book awards. Having now won the Femina he will automatically be struck off the list of contenders. "It's his misfortune, he won't sell so many copies of his book now," one member of the Goncourt panel told French radio. His 500-page *L'Œil Du Silence* (The Eye Of Silence) recounts a fictional affair between Lee Miller — the real-life U.S. model, photographer and muse of the 1920s — and a journalist as they wandered across the shattered Europe of 1944 to 1946. None of the five major literary prizes to be announced this month, nor the 1,000-odd minor ones handed out in France, carries a significant financial reward. The Goncourt, to be announced Monday, pays a token 50 franc (\$9). One of the other prizes carries a free meal. But winners can expect a big boost to sales of their works. The Goncourt with its distinctive red sash awarded weeks before Christmas guarantees additional sales of up to 500,000 copies. The Femina on the other hand is worth only between \$50,000 to \$100,000 extra copies.

Gucci accused of starving horses

YORKTOWN, New York (AFP) — Ten badly underfed horses were seized by authorities from New York stables where designer Paolo Gucci has business interests, authorities said. The Arabian horses seized in a raid Thursday were so thin their ribs and bones were sticking out, said Tricia Dencker, owner of the farm where federal agents took the animals. A federal court ordered the repossession of the expensive animals after the luxury accessories king allegedly failed to pay for their care. Gucci is accused of starving the approximately \$10,000 horses at the Yorktown ranch according to his wife, neighbors, employees and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The 62-year-old Gucci is fighting a divorce battle with his wife, said Peter Bronstein, the wife's lawyer. He said Gucci bought the farm about five years ago as a country retreat, but took little care of it after divorce proceedings began in 1991.

Jordan National basketball team leaves today for Asian Championships

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's national basketball team leaves for Jakarta, Indonesia, Sunday to take part in the 17th Asian Basketball Championships which will be held on Nov. 12-21.

Eighteen countries will be vying to capture the competition's top two places to represent Asia in the World Basketball Championships.

"Our task will not be easy, but we will seek to score the best results possible," Samir Janakat, vice president of the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) told the Jordan Times.

Participating teams have been divided into four groups. The top two teams in each group will advance to the second round where the four winning teams will qualify to the semifinal round and compete for the top four positions, while the losers will play for 5-8th places.

Jordan is in Group A with China, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Thailand.

Group B includes S. Korea, the Philippines, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates.

Japan, Iran, Hong Kong and Indonesia are in Group C, while Group D includes Taiwan, N. Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia and Bangladesh.

According to JBF reports, the Kingdom's national team has completed its preparations and is in good form to challenge other Asian hopefuls.

The Jordanian team will have a tough task when they take on Asian titans China. Assuming that Jordan will beat Pakistan and Thailand, they will have to secure a win over Saudi Arabia to qualify for the second round.

In the last Asian Championships in 1991 held in Kobe, Japan, the Jordanian team had captured eighth place. They lost 97-73 to Saudi Arabia and defeated Singapore 123-67 to qualify for the

second round.

Although the JBF this year had drawn up a carefully-studied training programme to ensure an advanced standing in this year's championship, the schedule did not materialise except for the organising of the International Basketball Championships in which teams from Iraq, Lebanon, Russia and Bulgaria provided a good opportunity for the Jordanian team to reassess its plans and avoid any shortcomings.

According to officials, the international tournament cost the JBF JD 38,000. Part of the expenses were covered by a sponsor. The JBF cancelled plans to host at least two top teams from Russia or Egypt and holding a training camp in Eastern Europe prior to departure to Jakarta as that would have cost the cash-strapped federation another JD 15,000.

So far the JBF has been unable to come up with a sponsor to cover the approximate cost of JD 17,000 for participation in the Asian Championships.

The national team, who had a tough twice-a-day training programme over the past weeks, was also hindered by bureaucratic complications surrounding four of the team's members who are university students. Key guard Naser Bushnaq missed practice and is now certain to miss the championships due to an aggravated ankle injury, as will Muntaser Abdullatayeb who had previously hinted that he might not be able to leave his studies in the school of medicine, but the team's coach and officials had nevertheless pressed for his joining the national team's training anyway.

The team includes Murad and Hilal Barakat, Marwan Ma'touq, Youssef Zaghloul, Samir Murqus, Mohammad Al Shamali, Marwan Al Saeidi, Ziyad Al Nabulsi, Walid Badran, Kamal al Helou, Jihad Saliba.

Jordan plays Saudi Arabia on the opening day, Friday Nov. 12. They next face Pakistan on Nov. 14; China on Nov. 15 and Thailand on Nov. 16. The second round begins on Nov. 17.

No favours for AC Milan

GENEVA (AFP) — AC Milan face an uphill task in their bid for a fifth European Cup victory after the draw for the Champions League put them on a collision course with Werder Bremen, Anderlecht and FC Porto.

Fabio Capello's men may be favourites on paper to finish top of Pool B, but theirs is the tougher of the two groups announced by UEFA here Friday.

Despite victories in 1990, 1989, 1969 and 1963, and a place in the final this year against Olympique Marseille, the Italian Champions were putting a brave face on their fate here.

Silvano Ramaccioni, the club's sporting director, said: "We've drawn the hardest pool. But we're used to things being difficult in the European Cup."

They will be helped by the fact that this season will see the top two from each pool move into the semifinals. Previously, the pool winners went directly into the final.

Galatasaray's reward for knocking out English hopefuls Manchester United is a place in Group A alongside Johan Cruyff's Barcelona, winners in 1992, Russia's Spartak Moscow and Marseille's replacements Monaco.

Amadeo Barnabeu, Barcelona's sporting director, said: "It's a positive draw. Galatasaray are a good side, although it's Spartak Moscow that we're most worried about. But at least we'll be playing them in March after their break."

"We'll have to watch out for Monaco, since they've reached this stage of the competition," Galatasaray could well reach

the semis, along with Barcelona.

The Turkish side, who knocked Monaco out of the quarterfinals of the same competition in 1990, certainly have no doubts.

Mehmet Cansun, the club's general secretary, said "I am sure that we will at least reach the semifinals. We've had good results against the best sides in Europe, like Eintracht Frankfurt and AS Roma, for the past four or five years."

Club President Alp Yilmaz added: "I'm optimistic. What's to stop us making Barcelona suffer the same fate as Manchester United?"

Monaco coach Arsene Wenger vowed to wreak vengeance on the Turks for their humiliating of Alex Ferguson's men.

"We will get revenge for Manchester United, and I don't think the surprise element will have such an effect now. But I don't yet know the strength of their team," Wenger said.

The round-robin leagues start on Nov. 24 and finish on April 13, 1994. The top side in each pool play the runners-up in the other pool in a sudden-death match to decide the final line-up on May 18.

English hopes now fall on Arsenal and their favourable draw in the quarterfinals of the European Cup Winners' Cup next March.

Holders Parma, who needs a penalty shoot-out to beat Israeli minnows Maccabi Haifa in midweek, will need to raise their game again if Ajax Amsterdam, whose flowing attacking football has swept aside the Turks of Beşiktaş and Croatia's Hajduk Split.

But Arsenal, who walloped

Standard Liege 10-0 on aggregate, have been rewarded with a trip to Torino for their first leg.

Kenneth Friar, the Gunners' managing director, said: "We are very pleased to play Torino, one of the best teams in Europe at the moment."

"I am delighted to play in Italy again. I wouldn't dream of making a forecast. I'm not Muhammad Ali."

British bookmakers William Hill had no such reservations about Arsenal's chances, quoting them as second favourites to lift the trophy.

Parma are 11-4 favourites, but George Graham's men are rated 5-1 against Torino's even money.

Torino, currently midtable in the calcio, represent a much easier target than the other two fearsome sides in the last eight — Real Madrid and Paris St Germain, who face each other in a match of real vengeance.

In last season's UEFA Cup quarterfinals, Real beat PSG 3-1 in Madrid, but the French won the return leg 4-1 at the Parc Des Princes with a late flourish.

Jean-Michel Moutier, PSG's sporting chief, said "it will be revenge for Real Madrid, and for us, the chance to confirm our brilliant qualification last spring."

"Of course, it's bound to be a difficult match, but the good thing is that we're playing the second leg at the Parc, like last season, and I'll be hoping for the same result."

Real's director general Innocencio Arias acknowledged that revenge would be in the air.

"The players were hoping to get PSG — but this time, we've

been warned."

In the fourth match, Benfica start off by hosting Bayer Leverkusen of Germany.

If Arsenal fans are happy with their opponents, the UEFA Cup draw could have been kinder to Norwich City, who downed Bayern Munich in the second round.

The Canaries face Inter Milan, but are frightened of no one.

Norwich manager Mike Walker said: "We are delighted with the draw, I think it's just reward for the good win over Bayern Munich and I am delighted for the fans that it's such a fantastic fixture."

Inter Milan have some world-class players but then so did Bayern Munich, so we'll approach it in exactly the same way."

Skipper Ian Butterworth said: "It's a great test against the cream of Italian football. No one gave us a chance against Bayern but we came through that with flying colours and over two games who knows what might happen."

Internazionale only beat Apollon Limassol 4-3 on aggregate after drawing 3-3 in Cyprus Wednesday night.

Tenerife have arguably the toughest match against holders and Italian League leaders Juventus.

Borussia Dortmund, last year's finalists, should get the better of Denmark's IF Brøndby to make the quarterfinals, but their German neighbours Eintracht Frankfurt have a tougher task.

Frankfurt, three points clear at the top of their domestic league, face Aston Villa's conquerors Deportivo La Coruna.

Samaranch hopes for warfare truce during Olympics

DUBLIN (R) — National Olympic Committee members from Across Europe unanimously endorsed a bid to return to the ancient Greek ideal of no warfare during the games.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch said he hoped such a truce could be implemented by the winter games in Lillehammer, Norway, which begin on Feb. 12.

"We are trying to implement it by Lillehammer," Samaranch told Reuters during a bi-annual meeting of the Association of European National Olympic Committees (AENOC) in Dublin.

Asked if he was optimistic a truce would be achievable at Lillehammer, he said: "I'm neither optimistic nor pessimis-

tic. We have decided to work to make this a reality. We know that it will be very difficult, but we have made our minds up."

The year 1994 marks the centenary of the IOC.

The United Nations General Assembly on Oct. 25 called for all member states to observe a symbolic Olympic truce, beginning one week before and ending one week after every game. It also pronounced 1994 a year of "sport and Olympic ideal."

"We consider the U.N. resolutions to be very important historically for the Olympic movement," Samaranch said.

AENOC President Jacques Rogge said backing by the world's main political body had reinforced and lent prestige to

the IOC's attempt to resurrect the ancient "Ekecheria" or "Olympic truce." During the five days the ancient games were staged, a truce used to be observed by the various competing peoples.

"It's the first time that the political world is sanctioning... our philosophy on peace," Rogge told the meeting. "I believe that it is a very important issue."

The IOC says the goal of "Olympism" is to encourage the establishment of a peaceful society by educating youth through sport blended with culture and education.

It wants an Olympic truce dedicated, as in ancient Greece, to a spirit of brotherhood and understanding and urged collective and individual

efforts to settle international conflicts through peaceful means.

The appeal, which the IOC took to the United Nations with the support of 184 members, was unanimously endorsed in Dublin where delegates greeted it with applause.

Pan-American Olympic Committee will also discuss a truce at a similar meeting on Nov. 18 in Puerto Rico.

The meeting was due to recognise the National Olympic Committee of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

But Rogge passed on apologies from neighbouring war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina. They had been unable to leave the country for security reasons, he said.

Senna grabs pole position for Australian GP

ADELAIDE, Australia (Agencies) — Brazilian Ayrton Senna ended the Williams Renault team's Grand Prix monopoly of 24 consecutive pole positions by taking the coveted pole here for Sunday's Australian Formula One Grand Prix.

In warm, clear conditions, Senna, driving a McLaren Ford, preserved his position when no rival bettered his lap record of one minute 13.371 seconds, posted Friday, in Saturday's second and final qualifying for the season-en-

ding Grand Prix.

Senna, who was 1.4 seconds slower Saturday, will start from the pole — his first for 17 months since last year's Canadian GP — with his fierce rival and world champion-elect Alain Prost alongside him on the front row.

Prost, in a Williams and bidding for his 52nd GP win in his farewell 1993th race, could not better Senna's time in his 12 lap assault on the twisting 3.7 kilometre (2.3 mile) Adelaide Street Circuit.

Prost's Williams teammate,

Britain's Damon Hill, leapfrogged from sixth to third on the grid with Saturday's best effort of 1.13.826.

Hill's session ended spectacularly, and nearly disastrously, when he spun out on his final lap and narrowly missed being rammed side-on by an oncoming car.

Hill's car was pushed to safety by track marshalls and the son of former two-times world champion Graham Hill left the track by a gate.

German Benetton Ford driver Michael Schumacher, runner-up here last year, finished fourth fastest with 1:14.098 ahead of Senna's McLaren teammate, Mika Hakkinen of Finland (1:14.106).

Defending Australian GP champion, Austrian Gerhard Berger, held onto his place on the third row of the grid.

Senna stretched his record career GP poles to 62, 24 ahead of Prost and former two-time world champion Jim Clark, but it was his first since the Canadian race at Montreal on June 14, last year.

"It's taken a long time, but I've got my single pole for the year and I'm very happy," Senna told a press conference.

"I'm surprised to be on the pole this weekend because both Damon and Alain had the best potential to be on the first row and for whatever reasons

they weren't able to get the maximum out of yesterday. I had a very good lap, and got it at the right moment."

"I went out to see what we could do in these conditions and I changed the car on purpose for the race tomorrow."

Senna said the times were slower Saturday because of the hotter temperatures, after two days of cooler, cloudy weather.

"It was much warmer today and the asphalt temperature was a lot higher so the tyres were working differently than yesterday's qualifying."

Hill said a slight improvement in his Williams Renault car had set up his quicker times Saturday.

"We worked quite hard on trying to rectify the problems that we experienced yesterday and the car was certainly a little bit better, it was 50-50, improvements in the air and getting used to the track."

Thirteen days after he assaulted rival driver Eddie Irvine, Senna said he should not have punched the Irishman.

"Nothing justifies hitting him," Senna said Saturday after qualifying in pole position for the Australian Grand Prix.

"I'm not justifying myself, but what went on was absurd."

Senna punched Irvine after winning the Japanese Grand Prix at Suzuka on Oct. 24.

Valuable prizes

On the occasion of His Majesty the King's birthday, the Forte Grand Amman will be holding its second open tennis tournament on Friday, Nov. 12 with the finals being played on Friday, Nov. 19 with the promise of valuable prizes to be won. All those interested in participating must have their applications in to the Forte Grand by Nov. 9.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HIRSHI
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A WORD TO THE WISE

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ K 9 8 7
♥ Q J 6
♦ K 7 6 4 2
♣ J

WEST EAST
♠ 10 5 ♠ 3 2
♥ 10 9 8 7 ♥ A K 4 2
♦ 10 ♦ Q J 9 8
♣ Q 10 9 7 4 3 ♣ K 8

SOUTH
♠ A J 6 4
♥ 7 5 3
♦ A 5 3
♣ A 5 2

The bidding:
South West North East
1 NT Pass 2 ♣ Dbl
2 ♣ Pass 4 ♣ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♣.
Do you ever wonder why experts sometimes play a hand as if they were looking at all the cards? More often than not, the bidding has been too revealing.

Once South opened the bidding with a weak one no trump (12-14 by partnership agreement) and North had shown interest in the majors, East had little to gain by entering

the auction with what was the best hand at the table. East-West were probably outplayed, and East was doing nothing more than passing information to the enemy. South made good use of that in the play of the hand.

Declarer won the opening lead in hand. Without benefit of East's strength-showing double, declarer might have gone after diamonds, or led twice toward dummy's heart honors. Warned that East probably held diamond length as well as both high hearts, declarer instead crossed to the king of spades and successfully finessed the jack.

With West now out of trumps, declarer continued with a diamond, ducking when West discarded an encouraging club. East won and returned the king of clubs to South's ace, who cashed the ace of trumps and king of diamonds, then ruffed a diamond in hand. A club ruff in dummy completed the strip of East's exit cards. After cashing the long diamond, declarer exited with the queen of hearts. That forced East to win and, although the defender could cash another high heart, the table's jack of hearts became the fulfilling trick.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Friends of Archaeology announces the postponement of Dr. Imfian Shahid's lecture: "Byzantine and Umayyad Palestine: the strands of continuity" From Monday November 8 to Wednesday December 15 at ACOR

Jordan Bridge Association

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هكذا صنع الاصل

Elections reflect King's commitment to democracy — ex-ambassador Harrison

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The multi-party parliamentary elections to be held in Jordan on Nov. 8 — the first since 1956 where a number of parties can legally participate — are a testament to King Hussein's commitment to democracy, former U.S. ambassador to Jordan, Roger Harrison, said Friday.

Mr. Harrison discussed the upcoming elections in Jordan during a luncheon sponsored by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, the U.S. official completed his tour of duty in Jordan several months ago.

"It is hard to exaggerate the King's dedication to democracy," Mr. Harrison stressed. "Democratisation, he said, is the King's 'leading political cause'."

The Nov. 8 election, "because it is a free election," will be another step in the democratisation process.

"If there is one thing for which King Hussein would like to be remembered in the Arab World it is as a pioneer of democracy."

Commenting on the King's views on democracy, Mr. Harrison said "I think he sees the democratic idea as the only counterweight, the only idea that can fill the kind of ideological void that the death of other ideologies in the Arab World has left."

King Hussein is looking for "the glue that can hold together social organisations, a glue which is Islamic, but is not fundamentalist," Mr. Harrison

said. "I think in the view of the King, that glue has to be democracy."

Venturing to make a prediction on the elections, Mr. Harrison said "I think we will find that the parliament looks pretty much as it does now. I don't expect there to be any great changes."

"I think people will be looking at trend lines and momentum, more than absolute results," he noted. Mr. Harrison stressed that all parties and factions in Jordan are seeking political stability and a continuation of democracy.

Noting the democratic experiment in Jordan has resulted in a more politically mature and pragmatic electorate, Mr. Harrison said "I don't think there is any faction in Jordan right now that would like to see the present system upset. No one would like at this point to have a confrontation on any front."

"This is true in part," he said, "because the present system has begun working, begun dealing with real problems. It has begun legislating, debating things that the country cares about. It has begun showing results."

Asked whether the Middle East peace process will be a major factor in the elections, Mr. Harrison said "My guess is it will not be the preeminent issue on the agenda of most voters in Jordan. Religious principles, tribal affiliations and economic issues will sway voters more so than attitudes on the peace process, he said.

Looking past the Nov. 8



Roger Harrison

election, Mr. Harrison said observers of politics in Jordan can take either a cynical or hopeful view.

"The cynical view," he said, "would be that the Muslim Brotherhood movement is bidding its time. It knows it cannot at this moment take on the status quo. It certainly cannot confront the King, who is at his peak of popularity in Jordan... The Islamists can, however, 'build their grassroots support and wait for their day to come,' he added.

A more hopeful view, Mr. Harrison said, suggests that "what we are seeing in Jordan is really the success of the democratic experiment."

"One thing democracy is supposed to do is force ideological movements to become political ones. There is evidence that that is happening. What it is supposed to do is lead to... public insistence on

not abandoning democratic institutions. I think we are seeing that too," he said.

Democracy has yielded an electorate in Jordan that wants more than just political slogans, Mr. Harrison said. Politicians that can't deliver may be voted out of office. "There has been forced on all political parties... a kind of democratic pragmatism which I think is very hopeful," Mr. Harrison said.

This political maturity and pragmatism will translate into a high voter turnout on Nov. 8, Mr. Harrison predicted. Voter turnout for elections in 1989 "was exceedingly low," he noted. This was due to the public's low expectations for parliament at the time, he said.

However, voter attitudes have changed, Mr. Harrison added. "Now, I think you'll see in this election that voter turnout will be considerably higher."

"People have accepted that this is a serious experiment that is going to go on, that it is not going to be cancelled... Therefore they are now going to be ready to participate," Mr. Harrison said.

There is evidence, Mr. Harrison said, that democratisation in Jordan has "created a popular backfire against the forces of reaction and anti-democracy in the country and that given a few years time the social consciousness in Jordan will be changed in such a way that whatever happens, (and) whoever rises to power, democracy would (remain) an unalterable fact."

No truce in Kabul fighting

KABUL (AFP) — A special ceasefire commission has been unable to secure a truce in Afghan factional fighting north-east of Kabul, which is now in its sixth day, diplomats said Saturday.

All foreign diplomats based in Kabul were summoned to the Defence Ministry for an afternoon briefing on fighting in the district centre of Tagob between Defence Ministry troops and the Hezb-e-Islami faction loyal to Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

Diplomats were told that the special commission set up to broker a ceasefire agreement had so far failed in its task because Mr. Hekmatyar had refused to accept a truce, and that at Saturday's commission meeting the two of his representatives had failed to turn up.

The fighting is between Hezb-e-Islami and Jamiat-e-Islami faction troops loyal to Ahmad Shah Masood, who officially resigned last May as defence minister, but who in fact is still the power behind closed ministry doors, and who by radio has been personally directing his forces in the Tagob battle.

It was Mr. Masood's representative who briefed Kabul diplomats Saturday, saying fighting is still going on "east of Tagob," the district centre which was captured by Hekmatyar guerrillas late Tuesday, but re-captured Thursday according to Defence Ministry officials.

Mr. Masood's representative told diplomats that fighting would "be contained in that area," meaning there would be no danger of it spilling over into Kabul, where the two parties have had no major clash since last May.

He said that by attacking Tagob, Mr. Hekmatyar had violated a general peace agreement which was reached in the eastern provincial capital of Jalalabad, last May.

At the Hezb-e-Islami controlled town of Sarobi, some 35 kilometres south of Tagob, travellers report the situation calm with no shelling, and the road open to public and private transport between Kabul and Jalalabad, which is near the Pakistan border.

The presidential press spokesman said the state was trying to avoid fighting in the Sarobi area for two reasons. It does not want to damage hydroelectric power stations there, and it does not want to cause a blockade of the national highway running east to the Pakistan border.

However, Kabul, which receives its power from two dams at Sarobi, has been without electricity since the fighting began last Monday, although it is not clear what has caused the stoppage.

PLO may execute alleged Mossad spy

TUNIS (Agencies) — A Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) official faces likely execution after confessing to spying for the Israeli intelligence service, PLO sources said Saturday.

The accused, Adnan Yassin, a consular official for the PLO in Tunis, was flown to Yemen for trial under the personal escort of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, the sources said, speaking in exchange for anonymity.

Yemen serves as headquarters for the Palestinian revolutionary court, which in the past has tried major cases such as the assassination in January 1991 of the PLO's security mastermind, Salah Khalaf.

Mr. Yassin, 47, deputy to PLO envoy Hakam Balawi at the Tunis mission, was arrested Oct. 25. His son Hani was also detained.

Palestinian sources said the Yassins were found to have placed listening devices in the offices of Mr. Balawi and another top official, Mahmoud Abbas, who signed the autonomy deal with Israel on Sept. 13.

Mr. Abbas and Mr. Arafat head the Palestinian follow-up committee for negotiations with Israel.

The two Yassins are accused of making clandestine broadcasts to Mossad, the Israeli intelligence service, and they may have been plotting to kill Mr. Arafat in a car-bomb

attack, according to Palestinian officials.

The case has sent shudders through PLO ranks in Tunis. Officials said Adnan Yassin, who has been posted in Tunis since the late 1960s, well before the PLO set up its headquarters here in 1982, was highly regarded by most Palestinians.

Mr. Yassin was close to Arafat and often had direct access. He also had close links to Mr. Abbas.

They said Mr. Arafat made an unscheduled stop with his private jet in Tunis on Friday to pick up Mr. Yassin while shutting down from Senegal to the Yemeni capital Sanaa.

However, PLO officials in Yemen denied that Mr. Yassin had arrived and insisted he was still in Tunis. Further efforts to trace Mr. Yassin's whereabouts were unsuccessful.

The trial before the military-style tribunal is expected to be swift and begin as soon as possible since Mr. Arafat and other PLO commanders are confident of Mr. Yassin's guilt, the PLO sources told the AP.

"Never before have there been allegations of an Israeli agent penetrating so high into the organisation's hierarchy,"

Through Mr. Balawi, Mr. Yassin had access to some of the PLO's most sensitive documents, including files on PLO operatives based in there.

War costs Sudan \$2m a day, ex-minister says

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — A minister in a former Sudanese government is warning the current regime that ending the protracted and costly civil war is the only way to save the country's economy.

The criticism in a magazine interview, which revealed the war is costing \$2 million a day, was the first by a prominent Sudanese of Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir's 4½-year rule.

The comments appeared Thursday in Al Zilal — an independent weekly magazine that under its license is not supposed to deal in politics. The government, which generally keeps a tight rein on dissent and has had more than two dozen dissident military officers shot, has not reacted to the article.

Until now, such outspokenness has been unheard-of in Gen. Bashir's Sudan. No opposition newspapers or magazines are allowed, and the main newspapers, the official Sudan News Agency, radio and television are government-owned.

The National Council for Press and Printing restricts private publications as to subjects. Al Zilal is supposed to report only on cultural and social topics.

In the interview, economist Awad Abdul Mageed said the

expenditures on the war are wrecking the economy and adding problems in foreign relations that deny Sudan badly needed financial help.

"The civil war in the south is one of the main causes behind the current economic deterioration Sudan is witnessing," Mr. Abdul Mageed said.

Sudan owes \$15 billion in foreign debts. The International Monetary Fund has ruled it ineligible for loans and in August suspended its voting rights because of payment arrears totalling \$1.5 billion dating from as far back as 1984.

Mr. Abdul Mageed, 64, was finance minister in 1985-86, in a civilian government that served under a transitional military junta that ousted long-time dictator Gaafar Numeiri. He headed Sudan's central bank in 1971-72.

Mr. Abdul Mageed said the war was costing more than Sudan has in foreign currency reserves, which is causing pumping up inflation.

"Without stopping this war, Sudan will never be able to alleviate the high cost of living, let alone end the suffering," he said. An end to the war "will open new doors for the rehabilitation of our foreign relations and will lead to huge amounts of aid to the country."

Environment group to meet in Egypt

WASHINGTON (USIA) — For over a year and a half a distinguished group of professional consultants from 40 nations have quietly tackled basic environmental problems in the Middle East.

They will convene in Cairo Nov. 15 and 16, for the fourth round of multilateral talks on the environment as part of the overall Middle East peace process, Dr. Tom Miller, head of the U.S. Environmental delegation said Friday.

Mr. Miller says little notice has been paid by the media to the technical experts who meet twice a year to do five other "multilateral" groups set up as a result of the Madrid conference in 1991 "because delegates agreed from the outset that their discussions would remain closed to the press."

The American delegation includes Mr. Miller, who is director of the Office of Israeli and Arab-Israeli Affairs at the Department of State; Theodore Feiler, deputy director of the office of Egyptian Affairs, Department of State; Ms. Maureen O'Neill, senior adviser and coordinator for international activities at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Gil Jackson, environmental coordinator, Bureau for the Near East at the Agency for International Development (USAID); and Jonathan Mangolte, Office of Cooperative Programmes in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs at the Department of State.

Four other multilateral delegations have recently completed the 4th round, those on Economic Development were in Copenhagen Nov. 8 and 9; on Arms Control in Moscow, Nov. 3 and 4; on Refugees, in Tunis Oct. 12-14; and on Water Resources in Beijing Oct. 26-28.

Mr. Miller, who noted that the United States and the Russian Federation serve as the co-sponsors of the multilateral groups, said the multilateral track has been called the "engine" moving the Middle East peace process because it is developing solutions to very basic problems that plague the region as a whole.

Earlier on, the environmental group identified desertification (the spread of the desert), and solid and liquid waste disposal as priority concerns.

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Israeli soldiers wound 4 in Gaza

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers shot and wounded four Palestinians during a general strike Saturday on the Gaza Strip, Palestinians said.

Two were shot in Beit Hanun village and two others at the Nusseirat refugee camp, they said. Merchants closed their shops to observe the strike called for by the Islamic Jihad in Palestine to mark the anniversary of the intifada against Israeli occupation. The strike was also observed in Arab East Jerusalem.

The Islamic group, which is opposed to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)-Israel deal for Palestinian autonomy in the occupied territories, says the uprising broke out on Nov. 6, 1987.

Most other Palestinian groups give the date as Dec. 9 the same year.

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Hectic three-week electioneering grinds to an end today

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Three weeks of hectic campaigning, backed with banners, posters, leaflets, lavish meals, computers, rallies and alleged vote-buying, comes to a close today, the last day for official electioneering before the Kingdom goes to the polls tomorrow.

Ministry of Interior figures showed that 1,203 million of the 1.514 million voters had collected their voting cards before the deadline expired at 4 p.m. Friday.

Officials expect between 70 and 75 per cent of those who collected the cards to exercise their voting right when the polling booths open at 7 a.m. Monday for Jordan's first multi-party elections since 1956.

Counting begins as soon as the booths close at 7 p.m., but district governors could extend polling for another two hours at their discretion to facilitate the process.

Initial results are expected to come in late evening Monday and the early hours of Tuesday. The Minister of Interior is expected to announce the official results around noon Tuesday.

Candidates appeared to have thrown in everything they had into the final day of the campaign, with huge ads in newspapers and last-minute hustings before the clock struck midnight, when by law, they have to take down the colourful banners

screaming their election themes from strategic and some not-so-strategic spots in the streets. "We spent so much time and money over the last few weeks that it is a pity if we fail to catch a few uncommitted votes on the final day," said the campaign manager of a businessman-turned-candidate in Amman.

Some never-say-die candidates even put new banners Saturday evening, obviously with hopes that they could catch the eye of the undecided voter during the last 24 hours of campaigning. It appeared to be a thoughtful move, given the fact that many of the thousands of election banners decorating the streets had degenerated, mainly because of rainfall last week.

Restaurants and outdoor caterers reported brisk business over the last three weeks, topped with massive orders for Sunday from candidates who apparently believe the way to a voter's mind is also through his or her palate.

"People tend to remember the last meal they had and perhaps even those who offered it to them" before voting Monday, was the icy comment of the campaign manager of a former official who apparently seeks better pastures outside state bureaucracy.

While some obviously sympathy-seeking candidates have been pleading that they were so poor that their "friends" had to pay for



For the working class candidates writing on walls

multi-colour posters of those who could afford it (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

printing posters, others appeared to take pride in announcing that their posters numbered 10 times the number of the actual voters in their districts.

"Who knows, perhaps the leftovers might come in handy in 1997," commented the campaign manager.

If food was a tool for some, according to some reports, useful household items such as heaters and blankets were the timely "gift" of some others with an obvious eye on the votes of the women. Yet some others distributed campaign pencils and sharpeners as well as books among schoolchildren, apparently

hoping the children could influence their parents or even young, as some voters put it.

Computer troubleshooters complained that they had to be on standby round the clock to fix the systems of candidates who opted for "the scientific method" to reach the hearts and minds of voters.

But complaints from candidates themselves ranged from charges against rivals of tearing down posters and banners to short-circuiting power at campaign headquarters at strategic hours — typical allegations frequently heard

in many of the Third World countries, particularly in Asia, which have embraced democratic elections as a way for life decades ago and used to even physical elimination of rivals in the race to legislative power.

At least in one instance, the election offices of a candidate in Irbid was burned down after someone threw an incendiary device at the premises in the first week after the Ministry of Interior accepted nominations beginning Oct. 14.

Several people sleeping inside escaped injuries, but the candidate had to write off posters, banners and all other

election paraphernalia. Subsequent reports said police dogs traced the arsonist to a rival candidate's office, but nothing was heard of the affair since then.

If arson indeed was the way of some candidates to gain an edge, several "poor" candidates complained that their "rich" rivals were "buying votes" — in some cases as much as JD 150 per vote. While everyone named the "culprits" in private no one would go on record with the allegation.

Some of them said the modus operandi of some of the "vote-buyers" is to make a "down-payment," and then "settle the account" when the actual vote is cast in his favour.

But how could anybody be sure that the voter lived up to his or her part of the bargain? "That is relatively easy," said a campaign worker. He explained that the process involved the voter going up to the officer in the polling booth claiming to be illiterate and requesting an official to write the name of the candidate of the voter's choice on the ballot.

"The catch is," explained the campaign worker, "the voter has to say the name of the candidate loud enough for the candidate's voting agent at the centre to hear. Once the agent is satisfied that the vote has actually been cast in favour of his candidate, the deal is completed, of course, away from watchful eyes."

Many candidates said they would foil the "vote-buying" by insisting that "illiterate voters prove their illiteracy." "In any case," said a candidate from the south, "my people will demand that communications between illiterate voters and polling officials be confined to the voting booth, out of the earshot of anyone else."

Officials said, as a rule, that would be the case. The relevant article in the Election Law lists violations as:

— Impersonations, voting more than once in one election, possession of arms in voting centres, forced entry into voting and counting centres with the purpose of influencing or delaying the process, influencing the freedom of election, or delaying the election process in any form, tampering with ballot boxes or ballots or voting records. Violators could be imprisoned for a period of three months to three years and face a fine of up to JD 500 or both.

Complaints of "disappearing" voting cards of people who are seen to favour certain candidates were also heard. Some of them were reported to have "reappeared" a few minutes before the collection deadline ended Friday, but, again, while recriminations were loudly voiced in private, no one would go on record registering their grievances.

COLUMN

Michiko begins trip without restored voice

TOKYO (AFP) — Empress Michiko, who has been unable to speak since a collapse 12 months, began a five-day provincial trip Saturday with Emperor Akihito, Imperial Household Agency official said. It was the first time the empress had left Tokyo since she fainted on her 59th birthday Oct. 20. The emperor and the empress were to visit a welfare centre for the disabled Saturday and a marine resources development Sunday in Ehime prefecture, southern Japan, the officials said. On Tuesday, the couple will visit a welfare facility for the aged in Kochi prefecture, southeast of Ehime. The empress, who has been unable to speak because of what her doctors describe as "psychological damage."

Diana becomes vice president of U.K. Red Cross

LONDON (R) — Princess Diana, who is reported to be seeking a more active role as an international campaigner for the needy, was elevated to the vice presidency of the British Red Cross. The organisation said the appointment reflected her increased interest in the international aid work of the Red Cross, seen in visits to Zimbabwe and Nepal this year. The 32-year-old princess has been cultivating a serious, campaigning image to suit her semi-independent status since her marriage to Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, formally broke down nearly a year ago. Media reports have said she is keen to establish herself as a royal ambassador to the world's poor and sick to thwart any palace attempts to downgrade her position because of her failed marriage. The princess acted to protect her image Thursday by dismissing reports she had suffered a relapse in her battle against the binge-and-purge eating disorder bulimia. In an unusually direct response to tabloid gossip, she joked in a speech about being portrayed as being on the brink of a breakdown and forever vomiting her food down the toilet. The princess will retain her old position within the movement as patron of the British Red Cross, the organisation said in a statement. The president of the British Red Cross is Princess Diana's mother-in-law, Queen Elizabeth.

Brazil governor shoots ex-governor

BRASILIA (AP) — Police arrested the governor of the northeastern state of Paraíba after he shot and wounded a rival politician who criticised him publicly, according to radio and press reports. Governor Ronaldo Cunha Lima was in custody after shooting Tarcisio Buriti, a former governor of the state, CBN Radio reported. The government press office of Paraíba told the Associated Press in a telephone interview that Mr. Buriti was wounded in the mouth and chest. Mr. Buriti underwent surgery and is out of danger, the press office said. The shooting took place at a restaurant in Joao Pessoa, the state capital 250 kilometres from Brasilia. The governor fired three times; two of the shots found their mark, the Journal Do Brasil Rio daily said. A Paraíba civil servant said that Mr. Buriti, a member of the Liberal Front Party, was a main critic of the governor, a member of the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party.

Omar Sharif recovering from heart surgery

LONDON (AP) — Actor Omar Sharif left a London hospital, 11 days after undergoing heart surgery. The 61-year-old star of Dr. Zhivago, Lawrence of Arabia and a single bypass operation, carried out by Sir Magdi Youssef at Harefield Hospital, West London, on Oct. 25. "He will spend a couple of weeks in London so he is near the hospital in case he needs us before returning to his home in France," a hospital spokesman said anonymously.